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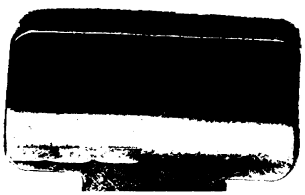

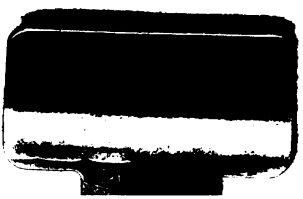

THE MAKING OF WOMEN

OXFORD ESSAYS IN FEMINISM

BY

A. MAUDE ROYDEN, RALPH ROOPER, ELEANOR F. RATHBONE, ELINOR BURNS, "THE ROUND TABLE," AND VICTOR GOLLANCZ

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"Male and Female created He them and left us to do the rest. Men and women are a long time in the making."—GRANVILLE BARKER.

ERRATUM. PAGE 76, LINE 1.

N.B.—For "unmarried women" *read* "the great majority of unmarried women."

PREFACE

AN attempt is made in this book to frame, in spite of differences of opinion on minor points, an unified feminist policy, and to suggest, without laying down an absolutely definite programme, the lines on which feminism should develop. While hoping that unanimity has been reached on the main issues, the contributors are of course responsible only for the opinions which they individually express.

In the body of the book it is suggested that "equal pay for equal work," considered as an immediate policy, is unsound. But it was thought well, in a question of such complexity, to represent also the other side; part of an article which originally appeared in *The Round Table* of March 1916, and in which the case for equal pay is exhaustively argued, has therefore been added as an Appendix.

I have to thank the Acting Editor of *The Round Table* for permission to reprint this article; and my friend Mr. D. C. Somervell for reading over some of the proofs.

V. G.

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THE MAKING OF WOMEN

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY—A RESTATEMENT

By VICTOR GOLLANCZ

THERE are thinkers to-day who, in their detestation of the evils of modern life, would attempt to realize their dreams of a saner civilization simply by reversing every condition that is found in the world as it is. With their eyes fixed quite naturally on the bad rather than the good, they fail to understand that there is much in modern life which does express, in a form perverted by brutality or thoughtlessness, certain instinctive needs of our nature; and that where this is so the true line of advance is to reform rather than to destroy. So some modern feminists, in their revolt against the intolerable idea that child-nurture and home management should occupy the whole attention of all women, have come almost to insist that to no woman should they be of more than incidental interest.

It may be well, therefore, at the risk of seeming to beat a dead horse, to attempt here a restatement of the foundations of feminism. It is difficult to present as a whole a case, different parts of which have been emphasized or slurred over as conditions have changed; at the present time, for instance, it is less important to point out the evils of inactivity among girls (which even before the war was rapidly disappearing), than to insist that every girl should receive specialized training for a particular occupation instead of merely drifting into anything.[1] Nevertheless, it is hoped that such a restatement will not be without value. In the first place, there is still a volume of anti-feminist opinion of the crudest kind, the size of which is very much under-estimated by feminist leaders; and, secondly, there are within the movement itself certain sections, not very representative or influential, but undeniably vocal, which give to the unconverted an entirely wrong impression of what feminism essentially means.

I

Worship of the individual has taken many strange and perverted forms. Men have confused it with spiritual megalomania, and found

[1] See Chapter VI.

in it the excuse for a particularly degraded kind of commercial selfishness; so that the very word has acquired a sinister meaning, and "individualist" has come to signify almost the contradictory of "altruist." But as a matter of fact it is just in altruism that the worship of the individual is embodied in its highest form.

Deny it as we may, the individual human soul is, for each individual, the heart and centre of the universe. Some men are free and creative, and the world is enriched by their self-expression; others are so fettered by spiritual bonds and so burdened by oppressive social and economic conditions that life, except perhaps in a few supreme moments, means nothing to them but a round of boredom and drudgery. The greatness of a society increases in proportion to the number of individuals who are perfectly developed, and who, while receiving value from all, at the same time feel the impulse to give.

Round this centre of human personality there would be, in an ideal society, ever widening circles of free association. Nearest to the individual, and affecting him in innumerable ways, come the family and the social group. Even at the present day, when the family has a largely patriarchal basis, this association of

men and women united by the closest bonds has great power to increase the value of life. It is from the element of despotism in family life that all its misery and wretchedness come; it is the element of freedom that gives it its happiness. Wider than the family, and all those associations which are based on personal affection or some community of intellect or profession, is the nation—not some mystical entity which, leading an existence of its own, gains territory and increases its honour and prestige without increasing the well-being of any one of the human beings from whom it claims allegiance, but a body of individuals united by a common history and a common way of life, and so becoming richer through sympathy. Beyond families and groups and nations, and including them all, lies the World-State of those who share a common humanity.

It is obvious that in this conception of life there is no room for any idea of selfishness. Indeed, the antithesis between service and self-development which was characteristic of a certain phase of Christian thought is wholly false. For self-development means nothing but the condition for realizing the best in our nature—which is love, sociability, call it what you will; and a valuable individuality finds its most real happiness in the exercise of those generous

relations with others which have themselves helped to build it up. But there is all the difference in the world between the anæmic altruism of mediocrities, which would lead to a society having no firm root of greatness anywhere, and the willing co-operation of highly individualized citizens.

Now the ideal life of creative activity and free service is lived to-day by very few—perhaps by no one in the fullest sense, in so far as the freedom of one is restricted by the slavery of others. There are many obstacles in the path—false educational ideals; a low ethical standard; a wrong conception of the State. But there are two obstacles more formidable than all the rest. One is the modern industrial system, by which some are doomed to excessive wealth and some to a degrading poverty. The other is the position of women.

The feminist movement aims at removing this latter obstacle to the realization of a great society. Its immediate object is to make the best life possible for the great mass of women; its ultimate object is to make this life possible for all humanity. The feminist traces many of the evils of modern society to the subjection of women, which arises from the conscious or unconscious worship of physical strength as the supremely important element in human life. For

the worship of force the feminist substitutes the worship of human personality; and having once done this he claims a free development for all who share a common humanity, not only out of a sense of justice to women, but also because he sees that unless women are free, there cannot be freedom for society as a whole. For it is in the mental attitude involved in a tolerance of women's subjection that is to be found the cause of the enslavement of half the world; and once the revolution involved in the granting of equal rights to the weaker were completely accomplished, militarism and the baser sort of imperialism would *ipso facto* have been thrown overboard. Nor is a change of attitude towards the life of women—involving largely a similar change towards the life of men—sufficient; certain definite innovations, social, economic, educational, are also necessary, whether to help on the development of the new outlook, or to ensure that, when developed, it may find expression in ordinary everyday practice. Thus feminism, seen under one aspect, is a religion; seen under another, it is a programme of social and political reform.

Still, it is the mental revolution that is infinitely the more important. How does it find expression? In the refusal of women to accept any longer duties imposed by others, and their

claim, not so much of rights, as of the right to activities of their own choosing. A sense of duty, which in a free society would be a force making the freedom of each valuable for all, has been degraded into the instrument of a kind of static stupidity. It should signify the spontaneous realization that life and our fellow-men have certain claims on our services—on the services, that is to say, that each individual feels he is best capable of performing; in actual fact it means too often a conviction that some ultimate law imperatively requires us to do precisely the same thing that generations of men and women, under presumably similar circumstances, have done before us. Now a sense of duty of this latter type, giving continued existence to primitive standards, has led to the acceptance by modern women of the idea that they have only one function in life —the function of being a "good wife." This belief appears under many different forms. It is seen in its most brutal nakedness in those countries in which the female is quite openly regarded as the servant of the male. In England it more commonly appears under the guise of a courteous chivalry. But whether unconsciously adopted or openly formulated, it affects the life of women—and of men—at a thousand points. The idleness of girlhood; the evils of married life; the appallingly barren existence led by

many women who do not marry; all these are to be largely traced to the acceptance of this belief. Among the working classes economic necessity, driving most girls and many women into industry, has given them a somewhat different position; but that the ultimate basis is the same is revealed by the phrase which commonly describes the object of their activity —"to *supplement* the earnings of the head of the family."

Now instead of accepting from others the duty of wifehood as the sole purpose of her being—for to accept this would imply that a woman is only valuable when considered in relation to another, but not in and for herself—the feminist claims the right of fully developing her womanhood. Such a claim does not in any sense imply a failure to realize the peculiar value of her prerogative as mother. Rather does it imply a fuller recognition of that value, for the perfection of her motherhood depends on the perfection of her humanity. But just as a man is not only a potential husband and father but also a human being, so is a woman something more than a potential wife and mother; and once we have learnt to base our view of life on spiritual rather than physical conceptions, we can see no valid reason for denying to woman the right, which she possesses in virtue of her

humanity, to take her part in all the activities and responsibilities of everyday life. Work—physical, mental, spiritual—it is this that women must claim; and feminism is concerned, not merely with removing the legal and social hindrances to the realization of such a claim, but also with liberating those instincts, now fettered in the great majority of women by age-long tradition, and often neglected or misunderstood by them, which crave for a vital and active life.

It is frequently said that by desiring a share in labour of every kind certain women prove that they themselves have adopted that very materialistic conception of life that they spend so much time in repudiating. They are deserting, we are told, a higher for a lower sphere; a certain sordidness clings to the ordinary work of the world, from which they should be only too anxious to keep clean. There is something blasphemous in such an idea. For labour should be the expression of the creative element in man; the means of satisfying that instinct to do and to achieve from which comes all the vitality of the world. It should mean the liberation of energy; a method through which intellectual and physical forces (for physical work of every kind should involve intellectual activity) combine to satisfy the hunger of the spirit.

Perhaps the most pitiful of all results of the present system is to be found in the conditions of girlhood. It is the case of the middle-class girl that is to the point here; in other classes economic considerations obscure the issue. Among the very rich a constant round of social enjoyment gives to life a sense, often quite illusory, of fullness and activity; among the poor girls are of necessity compelled to engage in work, at far too early an age, which is equally fatal to their proper development. But for the girls of the middle class there is neither feverish gaiety nor grinding labour; there is simply idleness. From the moment at which their education is finished—an education the incompleteness of which is itself due to the same false aim—they have simply to sit and wait—for a marriage that often never comes. At the age of eighteen or nineteen every one has an instinctive longing for activity. Work of almost any kind seems to hold the promise of glorious happiness, for it offers the possibility of strife and victory. And the girl, seeing her brothers plunging into that strife, or preparing themselves more completely by further education, must live a life of perpetual drift: she is waiting for something to happen instead of working her way towards a goal. But energies cannot be entirely suppressed: if they are denied their natural

expression they will seek for some other outlet. One need be neither a doctor nor a psychologist to realize what would be the effect on the life of a nation if complete idleness were imposed on men between the age of eighteen and the age of twenty-five. But we impose this idleness on women ; at a time when sexual impulses are at their strongest and the future course of life is being largely determined, we allow a girl, unrestrained by counterbalancing forces, to feed on herself.

It is at this period of their development that the evils first become apparent of that circumstance in women's lives by which their value is throughout impaired—economic dependence. Even before a boy begins to earn his own living the knowledge that he will soon do so gives a certain sense of liberty to his life ; but the girl knows that she will be in dependence on her father until she substitutes for it dependence on a husband. This is as true of the wage-earning as of other classes : the low rate of women's wages is largely determined by the theory of their economic dependence, and itself does much to reinforce that dependence. What is the result? Without occupation or the money that it brings, the unmarried woman is literally at the mercy of her family. Even when there is the deepest affection and the most perfect

goodwill on both sides a certain gulf must always separate the older from the younger generation; the father will consider certain things harmful to the welfare of his children which the children will, in their turn, consider indispensable to their happiness. Consequently the development of the child, if it happens to be a girl, is inevitably arrested; and she must either go through all the miseries of a hopeless revolt, with the souring of character and the destruction of love which it threatens, or must be content to be a mere shadow of those who are economically stronger than herself. In either case there is a tragic waste of value; and that waste is due to the fact that the family is based on the dependence of certain of its grown members, instead of on the independence of all.

Nor is the effect of the old ideal on marriage itself any less disastrous. Marriage should be, in its origin, the spontaneous coming together, after wide opportunities for choice, of two individuals that are uniquely adapted the one to the other. A true science of eugenics will not attempt to ensure the future well-being of the race by perpetually denying to each successive generation that freedom of choice which is itself one of the greatest elements in well-being; rather will it give to freedom so wide a field in which to range that men and women with natural affinities

may have the best possible chance of finding one another. But under the conditions we are discussing marriage resembles the attraction of iron to a magnet. Brought up to regard it as the sole aim of her existence, a girl frequently ends by marrying for any but the right reasons. Sometimes she imagines that a greater liberty and a wider scope will be given to her life; sometimes she eagerly welcomes any change that will free her from the boredom of her home. But, in any case, it is impossible that a perfect union should be the rule and not the exception until the partners to it are equally developed, until both have an equal range of choice, and until both enter into it as the natural culmination of their separate lives and the starting-point for a yet fuller life together.

And when the "supreme purpose" of her life has been achieved, that lack of occupation which has stunted her previous growth will still often continue to check and impede her. It is commonly objected that this is a mere theory; that even if the necessity for their previous development is conceded, as a matter of fact women do find in motherhood a perfect means of self-expression. Some undoubtedly do; though they are often led into a perfectly honest self-deception in the matter by the influence of a continuous tradition. But it is only to certain

women, and to them only during certain years, that motherhood comes as a complete satisfaction for all the needs of their nature. Therefore feminists would offer married women the possibility, but by no means impose the necessity, of combining other activities with the work of motherhood; and they would thus render exceptional those lives of a depressingly narrow scope which to-day add so much to the boredom and unhappiness of the world. In any event, if the ideal of marriage which has been suggested is the true one, it is essential that married no less than single women should possess economic independence.

There is one other great change which feminism involves. Among those physical characteristics which feminists regard as of less importance than the spiritual, are the sexual instincts. If they are allowed to predominate, life becomes almost entirely animal. Such a degradation would ultimately ruin the whole race; more immediately it results in the subservience of women who are physically the weaker and sexually the more passive. Animal conceptions create an atmosphere in which the friendship of a married woman with any man but her husband can be the cause of jealousy and suspicion; in which loss of virginity is punished by ostracism, but the debasing of

manhood by a humorous shake of the head; in which prostitution thrives and a vast number of human beings are yearly reduced to the status of brutes. Marriage itself, under the influence of such conceptions, often means not comradeship but merely the legal recognition of a particular sexual relation.

Yet feminists are far from considering that sex is evil. Rather do they regard prudery as being merely the obverse of licence; and it is in the very overemphasis of sex that they find the root cause of shamefacedness and concealment. When physical instincts have become merely a part of woman's nature, and men, in their turn, have learnt to regard her as a human being rather than as a member of the opposite sex, functions in themselves animal will combine with spiritual and intellectual activities, and so play their proper part in the development of the whole nature. For the just exercise of these functions is not only valuable in itself (simply as a physical activity), but it is also the key to that final development of personality which comes with the individual's all but complete self-revelation to, and knowledge of, another. If boys and girls were brought up to consider their common humanity rather than their sexual differences; if the overemphasis of sex in women were checked by their participa-

tion in a life of wider activities; if the whole mental attitude of men were in consequence inevitably changed; then the sexual side of human nature would develop naturally and spontaneously, and neither run riot nor be smothered and suppressed. The spirit can work through the body, and so increase the body's beauty; and the body must be used as an instrument, not merely of pleasure, but of joy.

II

This is, I believe, a fair summary of the foundations of the feminist case as it was understood by the main stream of moderate opinion. There were, of course, always variations of the argument, and much exaggeration, or glossing over, of various points in it. Women were sometimes said to demand rights, sometimes to claim duties, according to the political philosophy of the particular exponent of the case. Observers of working-class conditions concentrated on the evils of girl employment, while feminists who lived their lives in a suburban atmosphere made the idleness of girlhood the very keystone of their argument. Again, in the matter of sex, opinion fluctuated between the puritanism of Miss Christabel Pankhurst, who regarded every man as a monster, and the even

more futile attitude of people who arrogated to themselves the absurdly misleading name of Freewomen. Still, the main argument was as I have presented it. It was rooted in liberalism. The claim was for freedom, and it was in the humanity of women that the justification for this claim was found.

No feminist who has had personal experience of what subjection has meant to women will ever be inclined to underestimate the importance of the work done by the pioneers of the movement. The point of attack was well chosen. The case was based, and wisely based, not on a highly scientific consideration of the function of individuals in a highly organized society, but on the necessity for breaking down barriers without delay which had stifled and degraded. Woman had been told so long (charmingly or brutally according to class), "It is your function to bear children," that she was quite right in answering, however illogically, "Never mind functions; I'm a human being!" And I believe that even now, when the general position has been accepted by perhaps the great majority of intelligent people, and the war has made the old controversies seem very much *vieux jeu*, there are still groups which have remained absolutely impervious to any glimmer of sanity on the subject. Families in which the ideal life for

a girl is thought to be one of purposeless waiting have not by any means disappeared.

The old formula, then, was valuable, and its usefulness is not even now exhausted. But it was also incomplete. In the first place, emphasis on the humanity of women, on their similarity with men, led to the hasty conclusion that women could achieve freedom and happiness simply by approximating the conditions of their life to those of a man's as it is at present lived. The fact that few men are free and happy was often overlooked. Thus women claimed all labour for their province—and did not commonly realize that under a capitalist régime "labour" means something very like slavery; they demanded economic independence — without remembering that no such thing, in the fullest sense, is possible at the present time for any man or woman of the working class. Secondly, this same emphasis on similarity inevitably diverted attention from the necessity for creating special conditions for women to suit their special characteristics as a sex. Thus "equal pay for equal work" received in the past far more prominence as a battle-cry than the endowment of motherhood. It may well be that the time has come for this policy to be reversed.

Two supplementary propositions, therefore, must now be insisted on:—

1. Though women have struggled, and are still struggling, from complete subjection into a half-freedom, their aims can only be completely attained (so far as three-quarters of them are concerned) when the conditions governing the employment of men, no less than women, have been radically altered.

2. The freedom of women is to be attained, not only by the recognition of their right to take their share in all the work for which they are suited, but also by the organization of this work in such a way that part of it may be done under conditions specially adapted to the physiological and psychological peculiarities of women as opposed to men.

III

But though these and similar points have not received their due share of attention, few feminists made until quite recently the fatal mistake of attempting to abolish all differences between the lives of women and of men. In a thousand meetings a heckler would cry out, with a curious misunderstanding of the desirable, "You want to make yourselves like us"; and as often the obvious answer would have to be given, "We want woman to develop her womanhood, and man his manhood, so that the two may co-operate

as complements in work which concerns them both." But now the heckler is beginning to come into his own; and in the two most recent expositions by feminists of their creed his reading of the case is gaily accepted as the true one. "The Feminists," says Mr. W. L. George [1] (one wonders exactly for whom he is speaking), "argue that there are no men and that there are no women; there are only sexual majorities. . . . It follows that they recognize no masculine or feminine spheres, and that they propose to identify absolutely the conditions of the sexes." If this were true feminism would have been relegated long ago to the scrap-heap of academic theories, instead of being, as it is, one of the most important and vital factors in modern politics.

It is, of course, the lives of married women which the issue chiefly touches. Feminists of every school have realized that methods must inevitably be found for relieving *all* married women of the *perpetual* care of children (in the interest both of the mother and the child), and for allowing those that so wish to engage also, despite motherhood and while the children are still young, in some definite profession. But this is a different thing altogether from insisting that motherhood should be to all women a matter

[1] W. L. George, "The Intelligence of Woman."

of very small concern, and should be allowed to interfere as little as possible with an industrial or professional life. Yet such is Miss Wilma Meikle's [1] case; and she is commendably frank in giving the grounds on which she bases it. "These suggestions obviously assume," she says, "that there is no natural necessity for any very close association between mother and child after the first few months of infancy, and indeed it is not mere moonshine to ask whether maternity really continues after the child has left its mother's breast. . . . The truth is, motherhood is one of the most casual of all relationships, and one of the shortest lived. . . . In fact, maternal affection, as such, is short, though parental responsibility is endless." Accordingly, her eye is longingly directed to a society in which all women lead lives precisely the same in every particular as those of men (except for an occasional withdrawal from industry for a few months), and in which all babies are brought up in communal crêches. The latter (let us be quite clear) are not advocated by her as merely a temporary expedient. It is obvious that under modern conditions, when working-class mothers are forced into industry whether they wish it or not (a state of things which can only be reformed by the endowment

[1] Miss Wilma Meikle, "Towards a Sane Feminism."

of motherhood), means must be found for bringing up their children healthily and happily. It is also probable that in the society of the future, which will be characterized by the greatest possible variety and flexibility, there will be room for the crêche no less than for the home as we know it now, and for the home reformed. But this homeless, sexless, crêche-dominated life is presented as the ultimately normal. Accordingly, instead of insisting that mothers who so desire (none such are assumed to exist) should be enabled to care for their children and look after their homes in decency and freedom, Miss Meikle has nothing better to offer as a solution of the problem than the universal reduction of motherhood to a temporary incident.[1] She, and feminists like her, would not only open the door of industry to women, but would practically compel the guests to enter ; and they have forgotten that true feminism aims, not at conquest, but at liberation. As a matter of fact, the new

[1] I am conscious that I have not here done justice to a brilliantly written and very suggestive book. In one place, indeed, Miss Meikle admits that "generations hence, in quite different social conditions, it may be possible to estimate justly the value of a woman's home-making labours, and it may then seem desirable to free her again from outside work" ; but the book as a whole leaves the impression that such passages are in the nature of sops to the vulgar, and that any life but the industrial or professional is essentially undesirable for women.

ideal would be as stifling to women of one temperament as the old was to women of another. When antifeminism has quite passed away we may even dare to admit that there will perhaps always be women who, quite apart from motherhood, are better adapted to a life of intimate personal service, rendered from day to day as the occasion for it arises, than to one devoted mainly to continuous labour in some definite sphere of usefulness, or inspired by some single constructive aim.

Such is the first plank in this so-called feminist programme. And how is it to be carried? By a deliberate return to the sex war the disappearance of which is one of the few happy results which the war in Europe has effected. "The economic change" (I again quote Mr. George) "will be brought about by revolutionary methods, by sex strikes and sex wars. The gaining of the vote is, in the Feminists' view, nothing more than an affair of outposts. Conscious propagandists do not intend to allow the female vote to be split as it might be in an election between a Conservative, a Liberal, and a Labour candidate.

"They intend to use the vote to make women vote as women, and not as citizens; that is to say, they propose to sell the female vote *en bloc* to the party that bids highest for it

in the economic field. To the party that will, as a preliminary, pledge itself to level male and female wages in Government employ will be given the Feminist vote; and if no party will bid then it is the Feminist intention to run special candidates for all offices, to split the male parties and to involve them in consecutive disasters, such as the one which befell the Republican party in the 1911 presidential election in the United States.

"Side by side with this purely political action Feminists intend to use industrial strikes in exactly the same manner as the Syndicalist railway-men, miners, and postmen of Europe. Well aware that they have captured a number of trades, such as millinery, domestic service, restaurant-attendance, and so forth, and large portions of other trades, such as cotton-spinning in Lancashire, they propose to use as a basis the vote and the political education that follows thereon to induce women to group themselves in women's trade-unions, by means of which they will hold up trades, and, when they are strong enough, hold up society itself.

"I enunciate these views with full sympathy. . . ."

IV.

It is not suggested, as has been said before, that these and similar opinions are at all char-

acteristic of the great body of feminist thought. They are representative of certain small sections, and are exaggerations at that. But they are symptomatic of two more moderate tendencies which, if unchecked, might gather strength and become dangerous. One is the tendency to underestimate the value of the contribution which women, as such (and in virtue of their difference to men), can make to civilization, and in particular the value of motherhood; the other is not indeed any considerable movement towards a sex war, but a failure to realize the paramount importance of women working with men for a far-reaching reform of conditions affecting both. It is hoped that the following chapters will prove these two tendencies to be incompatible with true feminism, and that by the time the Conclusion is reached a sounder line of development will have been suggested.

CHAPTER II

MODERN LOVE

By A. MAUDE ROYDEN

Let me not to the marriage of true minds,
Admit impediment.

NO one of the problems raised by the feminist movement is more difficult to solve or more urgent of solution than that of love and marriage. It carries with it questions of economic, social, and religious importance. It is concerned with the wages of married women in the labour market, and their right to be there: with the rights of children, including their right to be born: with the rights of men as well as the rights of women: with the whole character of sexual relations, which means really our estimate of the physical in life. Yet these complex and vital problems cannot be discussed with much freedom even now, and the heart of them cannot be discussed at all yet—in books accessible to the general public. Something, however, may even now be said.

Mr. Bertrand Russell writes [1] rather despon-

[1] "Principles of Social Reconstruction," ch. vi.

dently of the difficulty of transition from the old ideal underlying marriage to the new. The old ideal, which assumed that marriage made of a man and woman one person, and that one the husband, had, as he reminds us, a certain dignity and beauty when it was sincerely accepted by both wife and husband as both natural and right. It has now, however, like the feudal system of which the same may be said, become impossible to us to accept it, and we stand uncertain how to proceed. But the race does not wait for our solution, and men and women marry without the old assumptions, which were so simple, and seemed so immutable; and the jarring relationship that sometimes follows is held to be typical and set down as a failure. Those who still secretly or openly adhere to the older view attribute the failure to its abandonment, and not obscurely hint that a woman who married young and had a baby every year, would have no time to think of her rights—which is probably true. The more modern teacher recognizes the futility of a return to mediævalism, but seems to admit the failure of modern love no less. To Mr. Bertrand Russell, as to George Meredith, the sense of strain and jar is poignantly present and infinitely depressing.

But to the young themselves this is not so. There is a buoyant hope, and looking forward

among them, which is untouched by the depressing spectacle of contemporary failures. Marriage, they will admit, is a much more complicated affair than formerly, but incomparably more interesting, exciting, and worth while. And as for failure, it is at least an open question whether the modern marriage, which permits a woman time to discover that she does not like her husband, is really in essentials more dismal or only less tragic than the old one, which gave her no time for anything but bearing children and burying them. In either case, such failures are not—or are equally—to be considered typical. And the young hopefully believe that we are on the threshold of a nobler conception of marriage altogether, for since we already set a higher value, in sexual relationships, on sincerity and knowledge than we did, it is certain we must be moving to a higher plane.

It is, of course, the last relationship in which sincerity and frankness become possible, and this is responsible for much of the jar and fret between married people to-day. All love between human beings has a physical element in it, and in sex-love the physical and spiritual are more equally balanced than in other loves. But about sex-love, the horrifying superstition has been held, that "physical" means degraded, or base, or impure; that a woman, at least, should love

without physical desire, and that a really refined and civilized woman should not only be indifferent to, but perhaps actually repelled by, the physical side of marriage. Before marriage, she should even, by preference, be unconscious that a physical side exists. Such detestable ideas have had their disastrous consequences. Women who are sexually cold have believed themselves to be ideally pure, and it has never even occurred to them—it could not—that they were really subject to a defect which should give them pause before they considered marriage at all. "Why do such women marry?" is the question bitterly asked by men. Well, for many reasons: for position, for freedom, for a living, or because they have nothing else to do. And since they know of the physical side of marriage either nothing at all, or only that they ought to know nothing, it is grotesque to blame them for marrying. Nevertheless, the consequences are often tragic. Indeed, it is difficult to imagine anything more certain to destroy both love and joy than the discovery by any man that that which is to him the very sacrament of love, for whose sake he has kept his body as a temple amid a thousand temptations, is to the woman he loves at worst a horror, at best a "concession to his lower nature." Such barbarous suffering to both can only be avoided by a much better understanding of each other,

and hope lies in the fact that some have already attained, and others are attaining, this understanding.

The old view was, apparently, that a "good" woman should be physically unconscious of sex, or if at all conscious, ashamed of it; that "falling in love" should not awaken passion until marriage was actually reached; and thereafter there existed a difference of opinion, men generally holding that marriage should awaken passion, but women on the whole maintaining the unworthy fiction that passion was only to be endured with resignation by the really virtuous wife. I have heard the happy wives of devoted husbands talk with a contempt of marriage which I can only describe as brutal. I have heard them assert that if only women knew what marriage meant, they would never marry. I have been remonstrated with by wives and mothers when I have urged them to tell their children beautifully, what others, if they do not, will tell them unbeautifully. "It isn't beautiful," they say; "why should we put *such ideas* into their heads?" And this is not the talk of women embittered by the brutality of degraded men, but of women who are beyond contradiction happily married. If marriage were only a "sisterly sweet hand in hand," no one could be happier than they, for in every other respect their husbands are all that they could wish.

Of course there is another side to this ; but we speak of the normal—the marriage which has apparently every chance of being happy, where there is real congeniality of taste and character, and where (let us go further, and take the ideal at once) both bridegroom and bride have kept themselves unspotted from the world. But before they essay together the great adventure of marriage, society has already interposed between them an almost insurmountable barrier of misunderstanding on the nature of marriage itself. The girl has been taught, partly by a shocked silence, partly by vague hints and veiled suggestions, that there is something disgusting to a pure-minded woman in certain desires and functions of the body, and the more undeveloped she herself is in this respect, the " purer " she may reckon herself. Perhaps she is in fact undeveloped and ignorant, the mighty prohibition of society compelling and enabling her actually to inhibit her own natural development and arrest her growth : if so, she goes to marriage without the least knowledge of what it is, and prepared only, if prepared at all, for something rather horrible. Her husband, often equally ignorant of her nature, takes it for granted that the passion which was prohibited till the register was signed, will awake at the right moment ; and by acting on this assumption convinces her that the physical

side of marriage is indeed a concession to the lower nature of her partner.

Or perhaps the horror of being in some unexplained sense not "pure" has not availed to arrest the growing womanhood in a girl. Her case has been perhaps in the past the worst of all, because she has been burdened with a sense of guilt from which her nature forbade her escape. Can we even to-day measure the suffering of such a woman? If she was unprotected, she probably "went wrong" if she belonged to the protected class, she became a hypocrite, perpetually pretending, even to herself, a sexlessness she could not feel, and afraid to show herself a generous lover even to her husband. Perhaps in this she was wise—or prudent at least. For with the old lax standard, which took for granted the sowing of wild oats by men, men have often preferred, even after marriage, a certain degree of coldness in their wives. Generous and joyful giving they associated with the courtesan, and shared the strange dishonouring delusion that purity in a woman implied coldness. But (if she was not thus lacking) what a perpetual repression and deceit this meant for her! Never to give all —always to hold back—to flee like Milton's Eve from what she loved—is that a basis on which to build the marriage of true minds? Or is it a wonder that women have been insincere—

with such a necessity for falseness laid upon them?

The young lovers of to-day are changing all this. The modern woman may, or may not, be passionate: that is a matter of individual temperament. But she does not elevate a defect into a quality, or think of sex as something alien and base. Nor does the modern man so easily assume his right to give the rein to his own passions before marriage, and so learn to associate sex with impurity. To both alike the highest purity is passionate, and the candour and courage of both makes real understanding possible before marriage. The man no longer dreams that courtship ends on the wedding night, but knows that love can never *take* what must always be *given*—or destroyed. The woman knows that mere patient giving is not enough—there must be joy in giving or the gift is nothing. There must be equality in passion, or one is shamed.

This clearer knowledge comes of a change in our whole attitude towards the physical. To the modern, "physical" does not mean base, and to say that the love of sex is "partly physical" is not to say that it is "partly vile," but rather that it is very whole and sane. We live in bodies, and find in them the temple of the spirit. We know more and more the meaning of them, and that "soul is form, and doth the body make."

The horror of physical disease, the love of health, which has even given rise to a new religion, is only another side of the same feeling. Whatever one may think of the philosophy of Christian Science, the sense that disease is as hateful to God as sin is surely a great and vital truth. And this truth is lifting us to a nobler sexual love. In modern marriage the body is equally honoured with the spirit, and nothing but a love which embraces all is truly marriage. There is a desire for union so complete that sex becomes the outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace, and to take the sacrament without the grace is really "sin." The old "double standard" was only possible so long as a man despised his body so much that he could give it to one woman—or to many women—while reserving a "purer" love for another; while he could expect the physical expression of love from a courtesan, and give her no more—and (in a natural reaction) prefer a woman more or less passionless for his wife. This divorce is not possible to modern lovers. A man cannot explain to the woman he loves that he gave only physical passion to those others, and that she has no need to complain, since this did not and could not touch his (quite different) love for her; for she desires a whole love for herself. Neither can he wish for an undeveloped prude for his wife; he

respects the physical too much, and asks as whole a love as she.

Some, therefore, advocate "experimental marriages," [1] that men and women may know each other more completely before they are allowed to pledge themselves for life. There is, of course, nothing "modern" in this in a sense. At least, experimental marriage outside the law is sufficiently common in our own country among those who still regard children as, in the long run, an asset rather than a debt.[2] What is new in the suggestion is its insistence on the need for perfect understanding between married people. But I think it to be a wrong line of development.

A young couple who lived together as friends only, for some time after marriage, regarding the legal ceremony as the door through which they might enter upon a common life, and learn to

[1] I do not mean by "experimental marriage" the Meredithian proposal of marriage for ten years, which is not in the true sense "experimental" at all, and seems to have nothing to commend it; but licence for a man and woman to live as though they were married until they have made up their minds whether they wish to enter into a binding contract or not.

[2] Among the poor, especially in the North of England, children are sometimes regarded as an "insurance against old age." It is not considered immoral for a man to "keep company" with a woman until they see whether the union is likely to be fruitful. If it is, public opinion expects them to marry; if not, there is no obligation. This is, in the strict sense, "experimental marriage."

know each other with such a perfect understanding as to make the consummation of marriage indeed a sacrament of unity, were surely in a better way. But it is curious that *before* marriage understanding and knowledge should be made so hard. Why not give greater liberty, that the two may be much more sure than in most cases they can be now? Though it is true much must always remain to be known after marriage, this seems no sufficient reason for making it so hard to arrive at the most perfect *possible* understanding before. We admit this half-heartedly when we condemn the custom of those countries in which young lovers are never left alone together, or perhaps do not even see each other's faces until they are married. But we are very nervous about it still, and still half expect that any greater liberty than that to which we are already accustomed cannot be good. There is a constant expectation that boys and girls, if much together, will do each other harm. What wonder if they do, surrounded by this murky atmosphere with which all things connected with sex have been surrounded? The modern lovers, who begin with a much more decent regard for each other before they are lovers, turn it into reverence when love comes. With such a reverence freedom is safe and noble.

It may perhaps be urged that freedom—which

many think already stretched too far—may sometimes, by putting too great a strain on passionate youth, provoke disaster. I would reply that it is our suggestive ignorances and hints, our grimy expectation of indecency that has made sex an obsession, and created disaster, and that to expect from youth a noble reverence for a great mystery and force, is to go far towards creating victory—or rather letting conquer a purity which is native, and which we have done our best to destroy. But I would add that, though "disasters" will be much less frequent where there is greater confidence and trust, no system can be devised whereby human beings can be infallibly saved from their own weaknesses and mistakes. Such weakness should not be regarded as a trifling or even amusing matter in the boy, nor should it be regarded as irrevocable damnation to the girl. In both, in either, it is a sin in proportion to the greatness of the ideal sinned against; a wrong haste, which suggests a lack of reverence, and might perhaps suggest further that these two are not yet fit for marriage. But it is no more an irrevocable disaster than it is a reason for rushing into marriage on the assumption that all that was wrong will then be as though it had not been.

On the other hand, though "experimental marriage" be condemned, future legislators may

be inclined to return to that more humane and lofty conception of marriage which, on the whole, characterized the old canon law, than to adhere to the caricature of it that is put forward by some ecclesiastical interpreters to-day. Canon law knew no cause for divorce, and held marriage to be indissoluble for any cause. But since this position was based largely on the text, "that which God has joined together, let no man put asunder," canonists did not assume that any and every marriage was made in heaven, or that God had joined together all whom Church and State had bound. Such binding might have been a mistake, and the marriage no marriage at all. The reasons for declaring mediæval unions invalid seem sometimes ridiculous in our eyes, sometimes they were obviously invented for political reasons, sometimes casuistical in the worst sense. It remains a fact that the belief in legal marriage as monogamous and indissoluble, but only when and where it is the record and sanction of a true marriage "made in heaven," suggests an attitude of mind far more humane and idealistic than that of the defenders of a stricter marriage law to-day.

Marriage in the future, then, will be based on a much better understanding than in the past. This is good. But there remains the sense of strain and jar in observers so acute and so

liberal as George Meredith, Bertrand Russell, Bernard Shaw, and H. G. Wells, to take names at random; and of freedom most incompletely won in such writers as Mrs. Perkins Gilman. How is it that modern love and marriage is still so often set down as a failure?

The answer is that, though the two great evils of insincerity and contempt for the body are being slain, the process has only begun, and there remain many other practical difficulties in modern marriage which have hardly even been touched. We can not easily shift the basis of such a relationship without an enormously greater amount of hard thinking than either men or women have given to it yet.

It is often said, for instance, that the modern woman does not desire children, or at most only one. If this were so, it would be a disaster, but I believe it is not so. I hardly know any women who do not desire children. Some women are even threatening to have them "at any price," if the slaughter of the war makes marriage impossible. It may be said that these are not "modern women" in the ordinary sense. I claim that they are, and I have some knowledge of modern women. If I err, as probably we all must, to some extent, from too narrow a deduction from personal experience, at least it will be on the side of the "advanced," whom I know

best, and among whom I have lived my life. My experience is that the overwhelming majority of women, whether working in factories or at universities, whether living at home or doing public work, desire to have children. There are women who are too idle, cowardly, or selfish to have children, and there are women who, with splendid gifts, find their vocation elsewhere. These are the exceptions, and the exceptions are not increasing in number. The fact is that we have all a certain vital force, which seeks expression in creation. Some of us have very little, or find life gives it no scope. Some have a force like Niagara, and like Leonardo da Vinci, pour it in torrents along the ways of action, poetry, art. Women's vital force can, and generally does, pour itself into motherhood. Fatherhood costs much less, and the force spent leaves much to spend elsewhere. I think, therefore, that there will always be more "creators" among men than women in art, literature, and science. Women released from insincerity will be much greater artists than they have been, and much greater scientists. But motherhood demands the expense of vital force, and we have all of us only a limited amount, and I believe there will be fewer women creating other things than human beings, just because there are so many of them who are doing that.

This is one of the problems to which too little thought has been given. The old idea that child-bearing was "what women were for" has, by its brutal disregard of the humanity of women, disgusted the feminist altogether. She points out that such a theory, far from exalting motherhood, degrades it. It leads to the brutalization and exhaustion of the mother, and to the sacrifice of the child. No woman can give to a family which is added to every year, the sort of care that motherhood really means. The appalling death-rate that accompanies a high birth-rate proves the truth of this in the simplest way. But to revolt against the crass animalism of a Martin Luther is not to ignore the fact that the bearing and rearing of the human race is a work of great and absorbing importance, demanding a far higher expenditure of vital force from the mother than the father. Smaller families and a wiser hygiene will diminish suffering and make of motherhood the joyful exercise of a great creative power: they will never make of it a small thing in the average woman's life. I hesitate to differ from many of my fellow-feminists on this point; I recognize how much their revolutionary thought has done, and is doing, to set us all free from an intolerable bondage; but I still believe that we are on the wrong path when we seek to reduce the burden of motherhood to a mere episode

—the birth of the child—followed by its upbringing in some Utopian nursery or co-operative crêche. The example of the factory is nothing to us here, or serves only as an awful warning; for we are getting beyond the stupefied nineteenth-century admiration with which we used to regard the making of a million pins where one pin was before. The factory-made pin is all right—it is only a pin; but the factory-made garment and factory-made food are doubtful benefits. And I confess to an invincible shrinking from the factory-made child. No mother should have her children on her hands all day, and doubtless there are some mothers able to bear fit and healthy children, but not fitted by temperament to look after them. But I am persuaded that the average woman, when she surmounts the ridiculous conventions of the richer, and the grim necessities of the poorer class, finds in motherhood—and prefers to find in it—her chief work, her most absorbing interest, as long as her children are quite young. There her vital force expends itself, and there the creative power of her humanity finds its expression.

This discussion is not beside the mark in a chapter on modern love, for it is on a divergence of view as to the claim made on the woman by home and children that modern marriage is so apt to split. Men, accustomed to the assumption

that child-bearing is "what women are for," are stupefied to find that women so little share this view as to refuse to have children at all under conditions that are intolerable. Indeed, while it is true that the "new" woman is showing herself in some cases exacting and unreasonable, those who suffer might perhaps remember that men have shown little of the quality of reason in their past dealings with her. To assume that a woman was intended by "nature" solely for house-keeping and child-bearing, and was incapable of anything else; to deny her the training, education, and even the elementary knowledge of facts which would enable her to do her work well, and frequently to give her conditions under which it is *impossible* to do it well; and finally, having limited her to marriage both for a living and for a career, to heap ridicule upon her if she tries to secure a husband, and contempt if she fails—this has been the example in sweet reasonableness which men have set to women. As a consequence, women are now refusing to have children, or to have many, are using contraceptives, or procuring abortion. I contend that such a violation of natural instinct and such desperate indifference to danger as is implied in this last at least, is not due to a failure of the maternal instinct, but both to a revolt against a bondage which has become intolerable,

and a refusal to bring children into a world so unready for them.[1]

The woman of education was the first, but has not been the last to rebel, and with the refusal to bear many children has come naturally the desire for a career, or at least for development, along her own lines, which is perhaps the heart of the difficulty in modern love and marriage. It is a question of the very nature of sex relations ; it is also a perfectly obvious practical difficulty. Can a woman in practice have a career of her own and fulfil her duty to home and children as well? I believe, at the risk of being regarded as a hopeless reactionary, that the average woman can never in this respect be quite so free to choose as a man. A man—obviously—can have a family and be a statesman, poet, artist, or what you will as well. An average woman, while her children are quite young, cannot give them all they ought to have, and be a great statesman or an artist at the same time. It takes too much of her. She may be a Leonardo, and have creative

[1] The Bishop of Oxford preached a sermon on this subject to the Mothers' Union in St. Paul's. Discussing the subject with my landlady in Poplar, she admitted that she "had heard something" before about the wickedness of restricting the birth-rate, but had opined (and still believed) that "they were laughing at us." I urged that his lordship was entirely in earnest, but she smiled incredulously: "Why, we don't have a chance to bring up them as we've *got*," she observed.

power enough to be, not an engineer, architect, and painter perhaps—but say, a painter and a mother. But as Leonardos are rare among men, so will such creators be among women. The bearing of a child, like the creation of a mighty work of art, takes virtue out of the worker.

It has never seemed a satisfactory answer to critics to ascribe to lack of education the absence —almost complete—of supremely great women artists. But both art and motherhood are the expression of creative love. If that mighty force is expended in one direction, few will command another torrent to pour out in another. The difficulties of actual time and strength for work are only dependent upon this supreme difficulty —the narrowly defined limits of creative force in each human being.

But if this is so, is it not senseless to rebel? Let women choose—they have a right to choose —to which end they will devote themselves : let them, if they are Leonardos, use all their powers to all the ends they can. But let us accept the fact that for most of us it must be a choice, and having made it, abide by it without that continual sense of resentment which our men (it seems) are feeling because we will no longer accept their ruling ! We cannot solve the problem or evade the choice by imitating the methods of the factory, which (we have at last learnt)

can never produce a work of art. For that the individual alone has power. Is a child less than a work of art, or can any co-operative system of nurseries do what the individual mother did for us?

Let us admit that in this necessity for choice there is hardship. Life itself is hard, and every choice we make in what we do means leaving something else we might have done undone. No one is altogether rounded and complete. No one does all the things he might have done. Even if all the obstacles raised by a badly organized society were removed, still we should have neither time nor strength for all we might have done and been. "If I had my life over again," Darwin said, "I should develop my taste for music." But would he? And if he had, would not something else have had to go? Every life is, *in a sense*, a maimed life. But sturdy honesty should compel us all to realize this, take it into consideration as one of the inevadable facts of human life, and having made our choice, abide by it, and by the inevitable sense of loss that will come sometimes, choose how we may, when we consider the things we did not choose, and therefore have not won.

If this sense of loss, which can by no human being be entirely escaped, must bear with peculiar hardness upon women, the gain also is greater

on their side. The average man, in making his choice, has not often an extraordinarily exhilarating diversity before him. He chooses between being a clerk or an accountant, a taxi-driver or a chauffeur in private employ. The average woman chooses between being a typist or a mother. This, of course, puts the matter far too high at present. Modern conditions do not allow so glorious a choice as this sounds. It is (for the woman) perhaps the typist's work under fairly good conditions, compatible with self-respect at least, or the wife and mother under conditions that are not tolerable. But I am considering not the artificial conditions, which may and must be altered, but those which I believe to be fundamental to our problem, and therefore not to be treated as avoidable. And here the average woman's case seems to be harder and more glorious than the average man's. To be an artist, a poet, a prophet—that is not open to every man. But to be a mother—that is open to nearly every woman. Her choice must be free, both from the limitations imposed by the jealousy of professions and trades, and from the harsh necessity of marrying "for a living." In time it may even be free from the vulgar assumption that if a woman gives herself to the service of humanity in some other way than motherhood, there is "something wrong" in her character

and temperament. The mediæval church recognized this. The world will have to recognize it too.

There remains the more subtle difficulty of the free development of women in marriage, whether along an independent career, or simply as an independent personality. There is in modern marriage, says Mr. Bertrand Russell,[1] often "a fight for liberty on the one side, and for life on the other. Women feel that they must protect their individuality; men feel, often very dumbly, that the repression of instinct" [the wish for mastery], "which is demanded of them, is incompatible with vigour and initiative. . . . The fundamental loneliness into which we are born remains untouched, and the hunger for inner companionship remains unappeased."

"The wish for mastery" is perhaps not so entirely male as men have supposed. That it has its most deeply entrenched and strongly fortified stronghold in sex is doubtless a fact. The desire to dominate the lives of others is, however, universal. Nations, religions, classes, individuals, all alike possess it, and it has always been found difficult to persuade those who are accustomed to domination, that their own lives can be preserved or be in any honourable sense worth preserving if they must forego this "natural leadership."

[1] "Principles of Social Reconstruction," pp. 190 and 191.

The religious sect which has never persecuted is simply the sect which has never had the chance.[1] The individual who never tramples on any other is a saint. And in this matter of sex,[2] the male human has gone far beyond the desires of the "natural" animal, and it is certain that he must retrace his steps. In marriage the desire for mastery has led to horrors. "Throughout the entire range of animal life the condition and inclination of the female fixes and determines the approach of her mate. Woman is the only female whose condition is disregarded, whose wishes are ignored, whose rights are trampled underfoot, and who is sometimes even denied rights over her own body." The extent and intensity of women's revolt against this bondage is too little realized still. The man in whom "the desire for mastery" expresses itself in brutal sex-selfishness may be condemned, but the desire to possess the kingdom of her spirit is in the end as indefensible as the dominion over her body; and there are still many men who would find in any reversal of this barbarous subjection of women an invasion of their own "wish for mastery" incomprehensible and intolerable. The subjection

[1] The Society of Friends in Pennsylvania form the single exception to this rule, that I have been able to discover.

[2] "The desire for mastery is an ingredient in most men's sexual passions, especially in those which are strong and serious." ("Principles of Social Reconstruction," p. 190.)

of the individuality of women to men, not in body only, but in morals, in intelligence, in initiative, is a fact in history. It has endured too long to die without anguish. Life itself is the exercise of power, and to be asked to forbear it that another may live, is to ask what a man will not give unless he has insight enough to see before him not so much a sacrifice of power as a transformation. It is doubtless a duel, as Mr. Russell suggests, between the desire of one for liberty to live, and of the other for liberty to exercise the power which is his life. But it is a duel of long duration. It has been in progress since the first woman uttered the first faint cry of rebellion—how many centuries ago? One by one men have relinquished those superiorities and powers which a generation before they believed to be essential to their dignity and well-being. They have now to relinquish—not so much the desire for mastery which is in us all—but the belief that this desire is noble or essentially virile, or that it is an invasion of their own life not to be allowed to invade the lives of others. It is natural to think so: there are perhaps hardly any men who do not think it. But the modern woman, though she can understand and sympathize with this exceedingly human impulse, neither admires nor will submit to it. The weaker nature will doubtless, if it is weak enough, continue to yield the

leadership to the stronger. This is a "natural" leadership, without doubt, and those who are persuaded that the man is always the stronger, need give themselves no further trouble about the matter. But to suppose that the male must have "mastery" in marriage, merely because he is male, is to suppose what the modern woman will not admit for a moment. If she is wrong, modern marriage must indeed be a failure; but she is right. The old idea that women like to be mastered will die. The pathology of sex shows many strange aberrations of the human mind and will, and the demand for imperfect development in women, and the abandonment of self-control in the intoxicating sense of being mastered, belong alike to the pathological side of sex. Human beings desire freedom, and are afraid of it. They commit excesses in the name of liberty, and immediately fall down and worship a dictator. But the desire for freedom is resurgent and immortal. Even women (though "use almost can change the stamp of nature") are now demanding freedom, and deposing the dictator.

"The fundamental loneliness into which we are born remains untouched." It is fundamental: therefore it remains untouched. Here modern lovers reach the final test. If marriage is to be based on understanding, freedom, reverence, as never before, if instead of the absorption of

one personality into another, there is to be a union of two equals; if love is to be based on perfect sympathy; can we not, we anxiously ask, lose even that "last fundamental loneliness into which all are born"? Is it indeed fundamental —unconquerable? Perhaps it is the effort to overcome this final barrier, break down this last fence about our lonely souls, which has made most tragic wreck of loveliest harmonies. The nearer we come to each other, the deeper and the higher our understanding, the more intense grows the desire for perfect unity, for the disappearance of that last defence. And since such union is not for human beings,[1] the barrier may not be broken down. The effort to break it results not in unity, but in a sense of desolation, even of violation, of love baffled, which before was triumphant. Is there not an inviolable sanctuary which love itself will rather reverence than seek to enter? Perhaps that is the most perfect love which seeks with the loved one to preserve those fences of the sanctuary which, clamouring in love's name, it *could* throw down if it would. In such lovely companionship not only souls of equal spiritual power (mating as rare as it is exquisite) but the strong and weak can dwell together in essential freedom. The love of God Himself, all-

[1] "The soul of man was made for God, and is restless until it finds its rest in Him" (St. Augustine).

wise and almighty, holds off a little from the human soul to give it room to breathe. We call the holding-off "free-will." The love of lovers also is divine, and must a little share this freedom given and guarded, neither besieging with its weakness nor forcing with its strength the fences of the soul, but rather preserving them. Perhaps in thus accepting the limitations of love for the sake of love, modern lovers will transcend by never transgressing them, and reach a harmony undreamed of yet but by the great ones of the spirit. Let me not to the marriage of true minds admit impediment.

CHAPTER III

WOMEN ENFRANCHISED

By RALPH ROOPER

Things are not equal. I suppose their excellences to make a pretty nearly equal sum in the end. But we're not weighing them each. The question concerns the advantage of both.—MEREDITH.

THE fundamental problem of feminism is, without doubt, the problem of finding some sane and wholesome adjustment of sex relationships. It is a problem which has as yet to be solved, since the attempts which have hitherto been made to face it have served only to create in the minds of the unlearned a hazy belief that the woman's movement is too much involved with prostitution and venereal disease to be quite "nice." And in the search for a solution of this most fundamental of all problems feminists will be hindered rather than helped by those who have succeeded in creating a "sex antagonism," as unreal as the antagonisms which the ravings of an irresponsible Press have

fostered between young and old, married and unmarried, "patriots" and "slackers."

But to say that the problem of feminism is the proper adjustment of sex relationships is, after all, little more than to admit that there is still a feminist problem. The whole of life is concerned with the delicate adjustment of the relations of the individual with his surrounding circumstances; and the interests of men and women are bound together by a myriad ties other than those of sex. And of these other ties, one of the most important, because one of the least carefully thought out and least successfully regulated, is the political relationship of men and women as fellow-members of the state. The struggle for "Votes for Women" has almost ended in triumph; but enfranchisement is far from being the solution of the problem of political relationships. A wider share in political life must follow a narrow enfranchisement; and perhaps it is in politics that women will best be able to find the compromise between the active and the purely domestic life. It is argued elsewhere in this book [1] that women, or at least married women, must always rather retain the enthusiasm and freshness of the amateur, than gain the detailed and exact knowledge of the specialist. If this is so, it may

[1] Chapter V.

seem that women are marked out as much by their limitations as by their special genius for the highest administrative posts, at least in England, which still prides itself on its government by amateurs, in spite of its sudden outburst of idolatry of the "business man"—or indeed, perhaps, the more strongly for that very reason.

But these are questions of the future. The vote, at the time of writing, is still to be won, and the scope of the present essay is rather to discover the theoretical basis of the claim to enfranchisement, and the probable results that will follow from it, than to consider the next step which women must take on the political path when the vote is at last achieved.

I

The society of mankind is built up, in the ultimate analysis, of the two primitive instincts of competition and co-operation; and from the interplay of these two comes the ordinance which binds together humanity in the progress towards its own perfecting. The machinery which gives to that ordinance some binding power, as yet incomplete, is the state. An unchecked struggle to gratify the lusts of possession would soon end in an anarchy red in tooth and claw; and to prevent the competitive instincts leading to

this logical conclusion, the state has been brought into being to devise restraining law, and to make that law effective by the provision of some sort of sanction. Where the competitive instincts are at their strongest, law is negative, content to ordain "Thou shalt not . . ."; and its sanction is the primitive sanction of physical force. But man is not only a competitive, he is also a co-operative animal, not content with mere negation. The ape was finally sloughed when the realization dawned that self-interest is not the only motive for action. It is the thinking being who can evolve law and devise for it some other sanction than physical force. The stages in the progress of mankind towards civilization are marked by the gradual transition from the supremacy of the competitive to the supremacy of the co-operative instincts, by the gradual subjection of the power of the strong man armed to an ethical judgment of right and wrong embodied in a code of law; and by the gradual supplanting of coercion by an intelligent consent as the sanction of that law.

History may be read in the light of a struggle between these two instincts. Each is the other's antithesis; yet neither has as yet been able to stand alone in supreme control of the conduct of men. Society blends the action of both; even in the most primitive stage of

society, the stage of tyrant kings, the coercion which the tyrant can exercise is limited always by the necessity of his retaining the consent at least of his bodyguard. Since practically the whole of mankind is organized into societies, more or less primitive, of individuals, it is in the chaos and anarchy of international relations that the nearest approach to the evils of unlimited competition is to be found. Though the embryonic beginnings of a super-state have been discovered by careful watchers of European politics, there is yet no society of nations, no power above and independent of each individual state which might frame a code of law, and enforce its observance. Between the nations, gun, rifle, and bayonet are the only arbiters of right and wrong, as once the knife and battle-axe were between individuals. A vague and shadowy body of legal theory does in fact exist; but no sanction has been devised for it, and "Faustrecht" can afford to laugh at the pious aspirations of international lawyers.[1] But in individual as distinct from international relationships, a certain measure of civilization

[1] The futility of international law has perhaps been due to the hopefulness of its framers, who imagined that the good-will of the signatory states would be a sufficient sanction to ensure its observance. One might as well expect the naked savage to observe the law from the highest ethical motives. The sovereign state with no superior power is nothing but

has indeed been achieved. Although our competitive instincts are still sufficiently strong, as in some cases they probably always will be, to justify the retention of a considerable police force, they have been curbed and tamed in such a way that they are now to some extent an influence for good rather than for evil. The state is coming to rely for the maintenance of public order more and more on the general goodwill of its citizens, and less and less on its power to coerce them into a state of sullen obedience to the law. The measure of a society's civilization is to be judged by the degree to which it has accomplished this transition.

But the transition from coercion to consent is nothing else than the discovery of political freedom. We have long outgrown our fathers' credulous belief in the "liberty" of the noble savage, and have realized that the limitation of individual caprice is the sole means whereby the individual and his fellows can together advance towards the highest freedom for the highest end. The recognition that freedom is not a natural

a corporate savage. This has at last been realized; and the League of Nations sets out to provide the effective, if primitive, sanction of force. Humanity does not develop in jerks; and consent will not be an effective sanction for law until nations, like individuals, outgrow the need for the drastic leading-strings of coercion.

but an artificial thing, the creation of the state, has in effect re-written Rousseau's dictum. "Man is born in chains," we believe now, "everywhere he struggles to be free." For the individual will we substitute the general will as expressed in the law; and we are slowly coming to realize that only in the voluntary subordination of the will of each to the will of all is true liberty to be found.

But this conception of freedom of course postulates the full political freedom of all. If all are to consent to "the will of the multitude made one will by plurality of voices," all must obviously have a share in the determination of that will. A man cannot freely consent to the law, and freely subordinate his own will to its commands, unless he has some opportunity of modifying it where he sees it to be imperfect. But consent to the law, unless it is free and willing consent, can never be an effective sanction; at the best it can only be a dull acquiescence, as shifty and untrustworthy as the acquiescence of the slave in the will of his master. The question of the establishment of consent in place of coercion as the sanction for law therefor resolves itself into a question of political machinery.

The machinery of political liberty at the present time is the system of representative

democracy. It is a creaky and inadequate machinery, for which not its greatest admirer would claim that it was functioning perfectly; but it is the "latest model" that has been devised, and imperfect as it is, it represents the outcome of the thought, effort, and idealism of many centuries. Its imperfections are due less to inherent faults than to a change in the outward conditions of life during the time of its devising. Under existing economic conditions, it is indeed very questionable whether political rights are really of any considerable value. The outstanding feature of the political history of the last ten years has been the discrediting of the vote as the instrument of political reform. In effect we are passing away from the stage of society in which "the counting of heads is substituted for the breaking of them." Before the war there were two contrary impulses in the current of political thought; one, born of the rediscovery that majorities do not necessarily include the whole of the law and the prophets of political wisdom, in the direction of arbitration and conciliation; the other, an offspring of labour's mistrust of its representatives at Westminster, and of the growing conviction that a capitalistic society is able to turn to its own ends the most democratic essays in legislation, towards violence and "direct action." And the recal-

citrant attitude of Ulster seemed to show that there were still some people who preferred the breaking of polls to the counting of them. It was coming more and more to be thought that except in purely party questions little radical change was likely to be effected by dilatory parliamentary methods; and the malcontents not only disputed the value of legislation, they also denied the vote any effective influence on its course. The vote was fed into the political machine, they said, in much the same way as the mythical Chicago pig is hustled down the slide; and the voter is simply the man who turns the handle, not knowing whether sausages or pork-pies will issue from the other end of the machine.

But though one may believe that no sweeping reform of the economic structure of society will be effected by legislation, there is no doubt that it does still affect the course of life, create to some extent the conditions of existence, and bind the conduct of the citizens of the state. And though one may question the real effect of the vote on the course of legislation, at least the man who may vote is a part of the political machine; which cannot be said of those who are politically subject to laws in the making of which they have no share at all. Ideally, of course, there should be no "subjects" in the

state; all should have a definite and adequate part in framing the law under which they are to live. Yet even if, for the sake of argument, one assumes that the possession of a vote makes a man politically free, it remains true that the overwhelming preponderance of the politically sentient people in this country are subjects in the most literal sense of the word. The adult population of the British Isles is about twenty-five and three-quarter millions.[1] Of these, only eight millions, or less than a third, may take even that small and indirect share in legislation which is afforded by the exercise of the right to cast a vote. The remaining seventeen and three-quarter millions are organized and dragooned without having the smallest opportunity of modifying the laws which they have to obey. They are ruled as despotically as the Russian serf in the days of Romanoff bureaucracy; with this difference only, that the despotism is in the main vaguely benevolent, and that it is exercised by their own familiar friends. We are so accustomed to think of England as the home of liberty that it is something of a shock to realize that the enormous majority of one's "fellow-citizens" are not citizens at all, that they are politically unfree, as completely outside the organization of the State as the helots

[1] Or was at the 1911 census.

in ancient Athens. England is despotically governed by eight million Englishmen; and it may plausibly be argued that the eight millions are themselves ruled by a few political agents and capitalists as effectively as the Assembly at Athens was ruled by the "Sausage-Sellers."

The consent of these unfree then means nothing, since they are not even members of the state. It is nothing to the point to argue that the state controls their actions and affects their conduct at a thousand points; or even that they are vaguely satisfied that this should be so. A brilliant essay by Mr. L. S. Woolf has pointed out that a club waiter does not become a member of the club by cheerfully accepting the same rules as those on whom he waits.[1] The point is that neither the waiter nor the disfranchised can do anything to alter the circumstances which limit their action. It is indeed questionable whether those who may vote are in any positive sense more free than those who may not; but at least the vote enables those who may use it to make some sort of protest against legislation of which they disapprove. Its value is perhaps just enough to make a reality of the voters "consent" to the law, just enough to raise it above the

[1] L. S. Woolf, "Magna Latrocinia," *International Journal of Ethics*, October 1916.

acquiescence of those who may not vote. The disfranchised cannot do even the little that the enfranchised can to alter and improve things which they know to need alteration and improvement; and their only alternative to an impotent acceptance of whatever their masters think good for them is an open revolt which brings into play the old sanction of force. If that sanction is ever to be done away with, and civilization made a reality, adult suffrage and the freeing of the consent of all is the first improvement which must be made in the machinery of political liberty. When that has been done, it remains to make the vote really mean something by giving it in fact that legislative power which it already possesses in theory.

II

At the time of writing, shortly after the Reform Bill on the lines of the report of the Speaker's Conference has passed its second reading, it appears as though the old battle-cry of "Votes for Women" were at last to be changed into a pæan of victory. The vote, for which women have fought and suffered single-heartedly for so long, is at last almost in their hands. The proposed basis of admission to the suffrage is admittedly inade-

of women in industry is impossible. But apart from this one important development which the enfranchisement of women will make possible, a certain amount of industrial legislation will probably be passed which is long overdue, and is only absent from the Statute Book because women have not been able to bring to bear the same pressure as men in support of their economic interests. The conditions of industry will be regulated in the way of better safeguards for life or health than exist at present in such trades as, for instance, the match-making; and it is probable that where women are at a palpable disadvantage as compared with men, specialized industrial legislation will be devised to remedy the more glaring of the abuses. It is perhaps hardly to be expected that any such sweeping measure as the Australian or New Zealand Industrial Arbitration and Conciliation Acts will be brought into force in this country by a single legislative coup; but their principles may be gradually extended to the trades in which women are sweated badly, and in time we may reach, step by step, the same position as the Australian.[1] And it is certainly eminently

[1] Women who consider that they have a grievance may apply through their trade union for a ruling from a wages board, whose decisions have the effect of the law. Unorganized industries are protected by the safeguard that where there are no unions, any five women may form one by

probable that the admission of women to the franchise would do much to remedy the sweating of women in Government offices; and that the Post Office, for instance, would no longer be able to pay its women employees less than two-thirds of what it pays men engaged on identically the same work.

But, on the whole, it is improbable that the course of legislation will undergo any very violent change. Experience has shown that the interests of men and women are not very dissimilar. In the early days of the suffrage movement, when its apostles were met with derisive offers of the use of a man's vote because it had always been useless to him, the more enthusiastic, and perhaps less intelligent, of the suffragists, as soon as they realized that the only value of the vote lay in its collective use, began to talk of the possible formation of a "woman's platform." This suggested that they intended to ignore the interests of men for the gaining of their own; which, of course, immensely delighted the anti-suffragists, who made, and still make, great play with this argument. Woman's suffrage would, they declare, mean

joining together, and may apply to a wages board with as much chance of success as the women in other and more highly organized industries. It should, however, not be forgotten that the value of these wages boards from the point of view of Labour has been seriously contested.

the creation of a sharp sex antagonism. Women would work together for their own ends, and their "great numerical preponderance" [1] would enable them, by wielding the power of a "solid vote," to gain any object on which they were agreed, even if it were to the detriment of men's interests.

In point of fact, however, experience does not bear out these hopes and fears. Perhaps it was rash to assume that women were more likely to agree on important political questions than men have proved themselves. The divergence between the interests of men and women has proved to be as mythical as the division of interests of fair- and dark-haired men. In the American Presidential Election of 1916, for instance, the votes of the two sexes were about equally divided; and in Illinois, the only State in which the women's ballot is different from the men's, and can be recognized as such, it was cast within 2 per cent. of the same proportion as the men's.

[1] In view of the great play which is always made with this "preponderance," it may be worth while recalling the fact that, according to the 1911 census, there were a million and a half more women than men in an adult population of nearly twenty-six millions; and a million and a quarter in the total population of forty-five and a quarter millions. It is, therefore, not so considerable as one has been led to believe by the vague suggestions of anti-suffragist speakers.

It is true that in the American Suffrage States much of what may be called woman's legislation has been passed. Almost universally the working hours of women have been limited to eight or nine hours a day, except in certain trades and at certain seasons. Almost universally the age of consent has been raised to eighteen ;[1] and almost universally some sort of legislation has been passed controlling the conditions of the employment of women in industry, and insisting, for instance, on the provision of seats in factories where women work. Married Women's Property Acts have been passed where they were not already on the register ; and in California, Idaho, and elsewhere married women can sue and be sued apart from their husbands. Provision has been made in Kansas and Utah for the payment of pensions to widows who are the mothers of children under sixteen ; and in California, Colorado, Wyoming, and elsewhere bastardy acts have been passed making both the parents of an illegitimate child equally responsible for its upbringing. Most important of all, in some of the Southern States maternity benefit has been established on so liberal a basis that, were it not given only to the poor,

[1] It is interesting to note that the average age of consent in the states which have admitted women to the suffrage on equal terms with men is 17·5 as against 15 in non-suffrage states.

it might almost be called the beginning of the endowment of motherhood. There is no doubt that a considerable body of legislation has been passed in the Suffrage States which would never have got beyond the stage of academic theorizing had not the women been able to back up their theories with a definite political power.

But it should not be forgotten that this legislation, which is primarily, though not exclusively, of interest to women, has been accompanied, step for step, with corresponding progressive legislation touching the interests of both sexes equally. Foremost among these are the acts dealing with the welfare of children. The American suffrage states have shown an extraordinary good sense in educational matters. Children may not be sent into factories before they can do more than merely read and write; a series of excellent laws guarantees for them a better minimum of education than falls to the lot of most English children. And when they reach the age of "economic value," further enactments protect them from exploitation and arrange welfare commissions (on which women are always represented), whose decisions as to rates of pay, hours, and conditions of work, etc., are binding on the employers.[1] Another

[1] Another comparison between the suffrage and non-suffrage states may be of interest here. In the former, the average

important body of legislation deals with moral offences; but without specialized study it is difficult to know how far the various Red Light Abatement Acts are effective. It is true, however, that serious thought has been given to the question, and that legislation can be discussed and passed in an atmosphere entirely different from the frenzied and almost hysterical fervour which clouded the passing of the English White Slave Bill.

It is certainly true that the suffrage states have not been more exempt than the others from occasional outbursts of "freak legislation." The sterilization of habitual criminals, idiots, insane, and epileptics in Kansas is always cited as the stock instance of this. But perhaps *excés de zèle* may be said to be not unusual in American State legislation, in which local patriotism sometimes leads to competitive absurdities; and men must share the blame for it no less than praise for the political sanity of the other measures. It is pointless to try to prove that men are responsible for all the bad elements and women for all the good; the real argument should be that the representatives of men and women together are at least as successful in their law-

minimum age for child workers in factories is 14·3; in the latter, a year younger. In the former, the average maximum day's work for a child is 8·6 hours; in the latter, 9·5 hours.

making as the representatives of men alone. The suffragist, contemplating the imposing array of social legislation in the suffrage states throughout the world, is perhaps entitled to claim that they are making a better job of it than are the English without the help of their women.

The truth of the matter is, not that in the states where women are admitted to the polling-booth there is a consolidated woman's party pursuing its own interests regardless of the interests of men, but that the recognition of the political rights of women, rights which are clearly not based on the ability to enforce their recognition, creates an atmosphere in which progressive and liberal legislation of all kinds is possible, and indeed inevitable. Cause and effect react. Public opinion must to a considerable extent have substituted co-operation and consent for competition and coercion before it will recognize women as definite persons having definite political rights. But as soon as women are so recognized their influence reacts on the forces which brought about their recognition, and public opinion is more and more set in the course of progress and civilization by the influence of the power which progress and civilization have themselves set free.

Thus the gaining of votes for women in

this country will perhaps not be followed by any sudden reorientation of legislative policy, but will probably strengthen and encourage the forces making for civilization and the sanction of consent. For the progressive and liberal legislation which is general in countries where women can exercise direct political influence is due less to the immediate working of that influence than to the attitude of mind and mode of thought which made it possible for women to be admitted to a share in political power and responsibility.

III

But though there will be perhaps little immediate legislative reform as a direct and practical result of the extension of the franchise to women, it does not follow that no change will have taken place. The mere fact of the extension of the franchise is a silent revolution of thought; it will be the first proof that men are coming to think of women less as adjuncts to themselves than as distinct human personalities having rights and interests of their own. The vote may be discredited as the instrument of political salvation, yet it remains the outward and visible sign of the inward and spiritual grace of citizenship. Disfranchised women are not "persons"

in the eyes of the law, and that to an Englishwoman is ten thousand times more galling than to the women of any other nationality. For the English genius is essentially political. Other peoples measure the civilization of a country by the standard of its arts and letters, by the intensity of its religious life, or by the degree of its material prosperity. The English alone judge of a country by the degree to which it has achieved constitutional and democratic institutions. To an Englishman Russia, the one country in Europe where religion is a really vital force to this day, had seemed, at least until the revolution startled his settled habit of thought, the one great European survival of barbarism; and Germany before the war appeared as but little better in spite of her material prosperity and her elaborate state socialism. On the other hand, the English, though they have something of the lazy man's contempt for French brilliance, and the country gentleman's abhorrence of American vulgarity and crudeness, have always felt themselves more closely kin to the two great republics than to any other of the nations of the world. The English breathe a political atmosphere from their birth, and to be disfranchised is to be cut off from the first national interest. How completely women have been cut off from this interest is

seen in the fact that the men of one class when they want to talk politics send the women to the drawing-room; of another, adjourn to the nearest bar-parlour. And the women in both cases are supposed to talk nothing but scandal and clothes. *Nous allons changer tout cela.* Neither men nor women are too stupid to understand each other's interests.

It remains, however, true that progress will be in the future along other lines than political. The feminist movement has gained inestimable benefits from having so definite and concrete an aim to set before the world; and in the struggle for the vote many of the other objects of the movement have been won, or at least brought nearer. But it is probably these other objects of the movement which will engross the attention of feminists in the future. The endowment of motherhood, economic independence, better education, the full recognition of a woman's right not to marry if she so wishes, the establishment of an equal ethical standard for men and women, may all do more directly to benefit the position of women than the winning of the vote. In one sense the vote is the least important of all the claims of feminism.

Yet in another sense it must always remain immeasurably the most important of all, and most certainly the demand for it will not slacken

till it has been met. For all the other claims of the movement may be achieved without any radical alteration of the attitude of men towards women. Men may find it to their advantage to endow motherhood (the Prussians have long since made that discovery) or to educate their daughters better than they have done in the past, but they cannot grant them the right to vote without admitting that women are at least their political equals. Women have always been convinced that they were at bottom much the same sort of cockroach as men, and in their efforts to prove it have at least succeeded in proving that they could be as irritating as fleas. That the extension of the franchise to women would mean another surrender of "tyranny," the end of an age-long attempt of one class of beings to govern another class against their will—or even, what is worse, with their sluggish and cow-like assent—is in comparison a minor consideration. It would mean before everything that men had at last abandoned their pretensions —and their sometimes pitiful pretence—to be an entirely distinct class of beings, immeasurably superior to women.

These ephæonal pretensions have been advanced not mainly on the ground that the brains of men are stronger and more nimble than those of women, but upon the wholly irrelevant fact

that in the last resort a man can always knock a woman down. One might have expected that the legend of Samson and Delilah would have warned the anti-suffragists of the danger of employing the physical force fallacy; but they have clung to it with a kind of desperate tenacity as the only one of their arguments which can even pretend to a logical foundation. For if logic governed politics, the perpetual contradictions of the anti-suffragists would long ago have destroyed their case. There is scarcely one of their arguments which does not contradict some other one. They have agreed, for instance, that women should not be able to vote on the vital issue of conscription, but they have quarrelled as to the right reason for this exclusion. According to their own political predilections, they have imagined that a woman's vote would be either unanimously in favour of conscription as meaning additional security without commensurate personal effort; or that it would be equally whole-heartedly against it because of the irrational idealism of women and of the sentimentality best expressed in the words of the popular classic, "I didn't raise my son to be a soldier." Again, some of the anti-suffragists argue that women are not good enough for politics, that they lack ability and disinterestedness; while the sentimentalists declare that

women's devotion and idealism are too lofty to be brought into the market-place, and should not be sullied by contact with the mire of political corruption. One wonders at first what exactly is meant by this argument, and reluctantly concludes that it can only mean that those who in the same breath declare that women are of all people the most devoted and idealist, and that whatever happens they must be kept safely out of politics, have themselves some interest in keeping political life a swamp of beastliness and corruption. Again, there are anti-suffragists who, basing their conclusions on their experience of those genteel middle classes from which they draw their strength, declare that women have no interest in the dull platitudes of insincere politicians; while there are others who openly fear that women are already too much interested in political affairs, and that if they once gained the right to be represented in Parliament, they would not be content till they had won the further right to represent others. These flat contradictions are solemnly paraded time after time on anti-suffragist platforms, and not infrequently by the same speaker. One can only conclude that those who argue thus are bent upon proving one of their own favourite assertions, that women are essentially illogical.

Faced by this sort of argument, the suffrage movement began to realize that the opposition it had to face was based not on reason or logical conviction, but on that dead-weight of inert conservatism which dreads any change for the sole reason that it may lead to a state of affairs "better, so call it, only not the same." The more reputable sort of anti-feminists, who have at least felt the need of some cloak of reason to cover the nakedness of their prejudice, have dragged up these ancient fallacies time after time, and though they have been time after time torn to pieces by the impassioned adversaries of the reaction they conceal, they have always been patched together and set up again in spite of their threadbare dilapidation. Weary of such profitless skiamachy, suffragists have, perhaps not unnaturally, fallen upon the physical force argument with a sigh of relief at finding at last a worthy adversary.

Curtly stated, the argument is specious enough. The state, it is claimed, rests ultimately on the use of physical force; and since those who can most effectively exercise force are bound in the end to have the deciding voice on any question on which they feel strongly, it is right that they alone should be responsible for the decision of all questions. It assumes, in fact, that only those who can fight for it should

decide a nation's policy; a dangerous enough argument, one would have thought, for the choleric old gentlemen of over military age who make most use of it. The fallacy rests upon an inadequate understanding of the distinction between brain and brawn, and upon a cloudy idea that the latter is the more proper attribute of a statesman than the former.

Even if the premise is correct, the logic of the argument may be questioned. One might well be daunted by the ruthlessness of a logic which handed over the conduct of affairs to those who were strong men of valour and perhaps weak men of brains. But is the premise correct? It is one of the first claims of the woman's movement that the state is not based on force alone. Certainly physical force is no longer the basis of individual relationships. It is surely no longer true that the man who can hit the hardest always gets his own way: that method of transacting business went out of fashion with the battle-axe. Nor is it true that the use of force has merely been delegated by a more squeamish age to the policeman. Men do not regulate their personal affairs according to their forecast of the finding of a court of law any more than they regulate them according to their forecast of the issue of a physical conflict. Bargaining and com-

promise are replacing litigation as litigation replaced the use of personal violence ; and recourse to the law is coming to be regarded as a *pis aller* scarcely more desirable than recourse to fisticuffs.

The suffragettes, as the militants were called by a derisive Press, did not realize this. They solemnly set to work (with a devotion, idealism, and self-abnegation which will always be an inspiration to the reformers of every age)

> To prove their doctrine orthodox
> By apostolic blows and knocks.

But though the smashing of a few windows might have been pardoned for a time, and even justified as a somewhat grotesque extension of modern advertising methods, the continuation of militant tactics gave away the whole case of those who employed them. To assume that you can convince a Cabinet Minister of the justice of your cause by firmly and repeatedly hitting him over the head is to assume that civilization has merely replaced the battle-axe by the golf club. The militants, as the "Peths" pointed out in the days of the raging of the "Panks," were acting on the very conception of life which they rejected, and were pretending that force is the only really convincing argument. Moreover, the ease with which they

could be arrested and imprisoned was a convincing proof that on this ground at least women could not argue on equal terms with men. But the suffragettes did more than merely prove that they were wrong in the negative sense; they also proved that those who objected to rowdyism were right in a positive sense. Not only did they show that the physical strength of women was powerless against the physical strength of men, but also that the physical strength of men was powerless against the almost incredible moral strength women could command. The hunger strike, an agony gladly endured in spite of the horrors of forcible feeding and of the ever-present fear of death, won back again the sympathies of many who had been estranged by the silly pin-pricks of the "Shrieking Sisterhood." The whole history of the militant phase of the movement is a glowing argument for the power of the spirit against the power of the body.

It is, however, not in individual but in international relationships that the physical force argument is most plausible. War has always made it appear as though the very existence of the state depends solely on the reserves of force on which it can call. But even if one were to accept this as true, war on a modern scale has gone far to upset any differentiation

between the sexes on this ground. Under the modern conscript system every fit male must be in the field; but without food and munitions an army would be powerless. The sheer vastness of the calamity has proved that women in the workshops and munition factories are a scarcely less important part of the armed strength of a nation than the soldiers in the field. Illogical as it may seem to suffragists, more people have been won to their cause by the sight of uniformed women carrying on the nation's business than by all the reasoned arguments of peace-time.

Yet even in international affairs the reign of force is coming to an end. With the League of Nations, or its equivalent, definitely announced as one of the peace aims of the Allies, it may reasonably be felt that nations, like individuals, are outgrowing the stage in which force and competition rule supreme, and are entering that further stage of development in which co-operation and consent will give the world the right to call itself partly civilized. The political recognition of women cannot but help to acclimatize the idea that force is not the only and final arbiter of human relationships; and the real answer of feminism to the argument that government depends on force is not that women are a part of that force, but that the

recognition of their political being would hasten the day when it will no longer be necessary to make so lamentable a confession. That will be the last, but also the greatest, of the effects of granting votes to women.

IV

But, after all, the importance of the vote can easily be exaggerated. It is only relative, and only when thought of in conjunction with the other aims of the movement does it become as vitally important as the removal of any disabilities must always be to any one in whose nature there is something of the "skiey grain" of a democratic creed. We have considered merely the impertinence to the humanity of the politically unfree; the actual moral loss both to themselves and to the community as a whole that this impertinence has involved has not even been mentioned. The argument has, indeed, almost assumed that the state ought to be what it is—a legislative organization, a policeman, and a universal provider, doling out slabs of education, medical assistance, and unemployment insurance to often unwilling purchasers. The ideal state, towards which the real has always tended in the best thought of the noblest spirits of every age, has always been a higher and a

nobler thing than this. The ideal state is not only a political but also a moral institution, working for the physical well-being not more than for the spiritual good of the individual men and women of whom and for whom it exists. In Mr. Asquith's phrase, its aim is "the joint pursuit of a freer and fuller life for the countless millions who, by their effort and their sacrifice, generation after generation, maintain the progress and enrich the inheritance of humanity."

But if liberty, that freer and fuller life, is the end to which our effort strives, a part at least of liberty is also the means to that end. Political freedom is a part of the whole; but the whole is a greater and more inspiring thing than mere political liberty, something less negative than "le droit de faire tout ce que les lois permettent." Liberty is the development of the personality along moral lines towards moral ideals, the setting free in each individual, and so throughout the state, of a great flood of creative energy. In so far as this radiant impulse is checked and impeded the individual suffers an actual moral loss, for the life of man in its completed sense is not only getting, but giving. And in so far as the individual is baulked and hindered in his desire to contribute to the great stream of splendid vitality which

should make up the moral being of the state, the community itself suffers a moral loss, since its life is not only a giving but also a receiving. There can be no real liberty for a single class; the liberty of the "free" lacks that contribution which the unfree are prevented from making. Only in the full, free, and intimate co-operation of each with all can the life of man be consummated and true liberty be found.

Looked at in this light, the importance of winning votes for women is seen in its true perspective, neither too great nor too small. The removal of any disabilities, whether social, political, or economic, under which any class suffers, is a victory over the "dark forces" in civilization. The first victory, most necessary and longest overdue, is the removal of political disabilities; but it is only the first, and alone will do little to heal this sick world. The mere granting of equal voting power to men and women will not immediately reconcile their interests where they conflict any more than it has reconciled the interests of capital and labour; but it will do away with one of the most glaring of all the disabilities which one class has inflicted on another. Other reforms must follow, for only when all disabilities are done away with will intercourse on equal terms be possible, and men and women of all ages,

stations, and peoples be able to meet together proudly in "the joint pursuit of a freer and a fuller life." In the past there has been waste of moral purpose, there has been loss of that radiant activity which might have gone far to redeem the burden which humanity still bears; in the future there must be no source of energy unused in the effort to make life for all

Good, great, and joyous, beautiful and free.

CHAPTER IV

THE REMUNERATION OF WOMEN'S SERVICES

By ELEANOR F. RATHBONE

AMONG the problems of reconstruction after the war, two at least are especially concerned with women, and they affect between them what are probably the two most important bodies of women—the industrial workers and the working-class mothers. The first is the problem of the position of women in skilled industry. The second is the question of what is to be done to safeguard the conditions under which children are born and reared, so as to ensure that the killing or maiming of so many of the best young men of the country shall not result in a permanent enfeeblement of the nation's stock. These two questions appear at first sight to have no particular connection. They are in fact, I believe, rather closely related, and though this chapter is mainly concerned with the first, one of its objects is to show their inter-relation.

The war has brought about a marked change

in the position of both these bodies of women. Its outbreak found the working-class mothers mainly dependent on such portions of their husbands' wages as these husbands, belonging to every grade in the hierarchy of labour, chose to give them. This source of maintenance being withdrawn by the enlistment of the men, the women have been transformed into an army of State servants, drawing their separation allowances direct from the State in amounts proportioned, not to the value of their husbands' services, but to the size of their families. It is the largest experiment in the State endowment of maternity that the world has ever seen.

In industry, the outbreak of the war found the women workers confined almost entirely, except in a few occupations traditionally their own, to the lowest, most ill-paid, and unskilled occupations. The barriers that kept them out of the skilled trades were for the most part unrecognized by law, but they were almost completely effective, being built up partly of tradition, partly of trade union regulations, but mainly of the sex exclusiveness in which employers and employed made common cause. Against these barriers the "women's movement" had beaten itself for half a century in vain; but within two years the necessities of the war have broken them down—by no means com-

pletely, but to such an extent that it is plain that if re-erected they will have to be based frankly upon the desire of the male to protect himself from competition, and no longer upon the alleged incapacity of the female to compete. Of course, there may be processes in which such incapacity is a fact, but in view of recent experience, there is a growing tendency among employers to put such cases to the test, instead of taking them for granted.

With regard to the first of these problems, most people have assumed as a matter of course that at the close of the war the women who have drawn their allowances weekly at the post office will go back to their old condition of complete dependence upon the bounty of their husbands, the quay-porter's wife who has been keeping eight children on a separation allowance of 43s. being, of course, reduced to her pre-war inferiority of income to her next-door neighbour, the ship-labourer's wife, who has maintained one child on an allowance of 19s. 6d.

With regard to the industrial workers, the restoration of the *status quo ante bellum* is admittedly more doubtful. The male workers, of course, with a few enlightened exceptions, would wish it, and, so far at least as Government work is concerned, Mr. Lloyd George, in

pressing his scheme for the dilution of labour, gave certain very unqualified pledges to the trade unions which will have somehow to be redeemed. The women themselves, ill-organized and voteless, with the sentiment in favour of the returning soldiers not only strong against them but strong among them, could not by themselves put up much of a fight. But they are likely to have two powerful allies: first, in the employers, who, having tasted the advantages of a great reserve of cheap, docile, and very effective labour are obviously not going to let themselves be deprived of it without a struggle; and secondly, in the growing public sense of the necessity on national grounds of making the most of our economic resources.

The more intelligent of the trade unionists are conscious of the strength of both these forces and are showing a disposition to make terms. Among the resolutions passed at the Trade Union Congress held recently was one demanding "that the conditions of female labour should be settled by the trade unions."

The implied assumption that the women themselves need not be consulted is naturally irritating, even to women who are not professed feminists. They are alarmed at the prospects of seeing their future in industry—their right to make a livelihood in the most profitable way

—determined by a Parliament in which they have no representation, or, worse still, trafficked away as the result of a legalized bargain between employers bent on the exploitation of women and trade unionists bent on their exclusion. In the words of a manifesto issued by the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies, they have no mind "to be treated as a football in a game between Capital and Labour with the Government acting as umpire."

In nearly all previous instances of restrictive industrial legislation the object has ostensibly been the safety and welfare of the restricted class—women or young persons or children—although it is an open secret that much of the pressure behind the legislation has had other motives. The pledges given to the trade unions in Circular No. 7 and elsewhere—that the dilution of labour shall be temporary—are probably the first instances for a century at least of Governmental interference with the right of the labourer to offer his labour in the most profitable market, based avowedly on the desire to protect a particular class of workers against competition. The success of the negotiations of which these pledges formed a part was thought necessary to the effective prosecution of the war, and no fair-minded person supposes that the Minister responsible for giving

them was consciously influenced by the thought that the persons to be protected were mainly voters, and those to be excluded were non-voters. That this is, in fact, the case is, however, an unfortunate circumstance, and the debates which took place in the House of Commons in August 1916 on the franchise question show that the Prime Minister and the leading members of the Government are well aware of this. The concession of women's suffrage would do much to put the matter on a fairer basis, to gild any pills that may have to be swallowed by women, and to prevent a renewal in an aggravated form of the stormy agitation of the years before the war.

But it would not, by itself, solve the real difficulty that lies at the root of the whole situation—a difficulty for which neither men workers nor women workers nor employers nor Parliament are to blame, but which, I venture to think, is habitually shirked by all of them, probably because of an uncomfortable fear that it is insoluble and cannot be vanquished, but only evaded by means of shifts and compromises or by pretending that it does not exist.

This difficulty may be most shortly put in the form of a question: "Is fair competition between men workers and women workers possible, bearing in mind the customary difference

in the wage level of the two sexes and the causes of that customary difference? In other words, is it possible for women to compete freely with men; without undercutting their standards of pay and so undermining their standards of life?"

The reply offered by feminists to this question is usually prompt and unhesitating, and is practically a denial of the difficulty. Women, they say, must, of course, be allowed to compete freely in all occupations. But they must not undercut. They must demand and receive equal wages for equal work. This is the claim put forward by practically all women, except, of course, when they are themselves employing women. I have not yet met the feminist whose principles compel her to pay her waitress the wages that would be demanded by a butler. The same cry has been adopted by the more astute and enlightened of the trade unionists, who see in it an effective way of maintaining the exclusion of women while appearing as the champions of equality between the sexes. It is probable that these leaders will succeed in imposing their views on their followers, though many of them are obviously rather shocked in their hearts at the idea of a woman earning a man's pay. They have a good deal of the feeling of the graduate of the London Univer-

sity, who in the early days of women's claim to academic privileges declared that his (pass) degree would lose all its value in his eyes if he believed that even a single woman had attained to or received a like distinction. But after the experiences of the war the cry for unconditional exclusion is likely to meet with so little sympathy that we may, I think, expect with some confidence to see women and trade unionists uniting in this claim, and Parliament possibly, unless capitalist influences are too strong, giving it legislative sanction as the easiest way out of the difficulty. It is worth while, therefore, to examine in some detail what the claim really means, how far it fits the actual conditions of social and industrial life, and how the attempt to enforce it is likely to work out in practice.

First, it must be pointed out that in adopting a formula so vague and ill-defined as "equal wages for equal work" feminists are falling into a very palpable trap. What is meant by "equal work"? That men and women are engaged on the same process in any occupation does not, of course, in itself imply equality, unless both the quality and the quantity of the output are the same. A woman who produces less than a man may be of less value to her employer, even if piece-work rates are

paid, because her consumption of all the standing charges of the factory—floor-space, light, heat, machinery, superintendence—is greater in proportion to her output than his.

Even where both quality and quantity are identical it does not necessarily follow that she is an equally valuable or at least an equally acceptable employee. There are in the eyes of most employers certain standing disadvantages of women's labour which have to be reckoned with. There is the fact that the law will not allow him to work her at night nor for overtime, except under rigid restrictions; that her liability to sickness (in most trades) is rather greater; that he cannot put her to lift heavy weights or to do odd jobs; that he cannot comfortably swear at her if she is stupid; that, in short, she is a woman, and most employers, being male, have a "club" instinct which makes them feel more at ease with an undiluted male staff. Above all, there is the overwhelming disadvantage, if the occupation is a skilled one, that she is liable to "go off and get married just as she is beginning to be of some use." [1]

[1] How seriously the last-named fact may influence the economic value of women's labour may be illustrated by the following instance, given me by the Chairman of an Education Committee, who is also an economist. At a training college for teachers of both sexes, it is estimated that the cost per head on the men's side is 50 per cent. more than the cost per

Of course, there are advantages which to a certain extent counter-balance these disadvantages from the employer's point of view. There is the greater docility of women; their greater willingness to be kept at routine work; their lesser liability to absence on drinking bouts, to strikes, and to other disturbances of the economic routine. But obviously most of these "advantages" are likely to be regarded by the employer rather as reasons why he can safely exploit women than as reasons why he should equitably pay them as much as men.

If the object of the claim for "equal wages for equal work" is really to secure for women a fair field of competition with men, their work being accepted or rejected on its merits, then to secure this object it seems necessary that any permanent recognized disadvantage that adheres to women workers as such should be allowed for by a *pro rata* rate reduction in their standard rates. The attempt to establish strict arithmetical equality between them goes further than is necessary to protect the men against unfair competition and really weights the scales against the women.

head on the women's side. But "marriage mortality" among the women teachers is so great that it is reckoned that the cost of keeping up a given supply of women teachers is considerably higher to the training institution than that of the men teachers.

Unless this is recognized and allowed for, any bargain that is struck on the basis of "equal wages for equal work" will prove in practice the equivalent of total exclusion. It is difficult to find a modification of the formula that suits the facts, but possibly it should read "equal wages to workers of equal value."

But this does not dispose of the main obstacle to the realization of the principle thus laid down. To understand what this is, we have to ask ourselves how it has come about that the standard of women's pay is, under normal circumstances and in the great majority of occupations, so much lower than the standard of men's pay, even when they do work which is either identical or of fully equivalent difficulty. For in this connection it is quite as relevant to compare the earnings of, say, a Court dressmaker's hands with those of a West End tailor, as to compare those of men and women elementary teachers, though the demand for equalization has usually been confined to the comparatively few instances of identical occupations.

The causes of the low rate of women's wages cannot be discussed in detail here, but they may be outlined. It is first necessary to make a distinction—so obvious that it ought not to need making, but which is nevertheless often ignored—between absolute and relative lowness. Women

earn less than men, first, because they do, or till lately have done, chiefly the less valuable kinds of work. But they are also paid less in proportion to the value of the work they do, and that is the part of the problem which concerns us here. The reasons for the inferiority may be roughly scheduled as four.

1. Lack of trades organization.

2. Pocket-money or supplementary wage earning.

3. A low standard of comfort.

4. A wage requirement based on individual subsistence.[1]

I do not propose to dwell upon the first three causes. They are obvious and easily understood, and their weight is, I believe, apt to be over-estimated rather than under-estimated. It seems better to reserve my space for a consideration of that cause which seems to me at once the most important and the most habitually underrated, and which in default of a better name I have ventured to describe by the clumsy phrase, "A wage requirement based on individual subsistence."

In discussions on women's wages, the fact "that men have families to keep" is usually

[1] The reasons are more fully dealt with by me in a paper on "The Problem of Women's Wages," published by the Liverpool Economic Society, Northern Publishing Co., Liverpool.

alluded to in a casual way, as though its bearing on the question were about equivalent to that of the proposition that men expect beef and beer for their dinner while women workers are usually content with tea and pastry. Surely this is a rather astonishing instance of the extent to which familiarity can blind even intelligent observers to the significance of the most obvious facts of human life. After all, perhaps the most important function which any State has to perform—more important even than guarding against its enemies—is to secure its own periodic renewal by providing for the rearing of fresh generations. Among human beings this renewal is a much more laborious and costly process than among animals. The pre-natal period and the period of immaturity last longer. Not only do children remain economically unproductive for fifteen years, more or less, from the time of their conception, but the lives of a considerable section of the adult female community have to be entirely given over to the work of bearing, rearing, educating, and training them. All this has got to be paid for somehow. During the last forty-six years the State has taken directly upon itself the cost of the school education of its young, and it is gradually in a hesitating and half-hearted way taking over the cost of some of the minor provisions necessary

for child-nurture, such as midwifery (paid for through the maternity benefit), medical attendance (through child-welfare centres, medical school inspectors, etc.). But the great bulk of the main cost of its renewal it still pays for, as it has always done, by the indirect and extraordinarily clumsy method of financing the male parent and trusting to him somehow to see the thing through. It does not even finance him directly, but leaves it to what it is fond of calling "blind economic forces" to bring it about that the wages of men shall be sufficient for the purposes of bringing up families. The "blind forces" accomplish this task, as might be expected, in a very defective and blundering way, with a good deal of waste in some places and a much worse skimping in others, but upon the whole they do accomplish it. The wages of men in most occupations are sufficient to rear a family, not, indeed, in many of them as families ought to be reared, but without glaring violation of the man's own standards, those standards which he expects to satisfy before he marries and has children, and which the laws of supply and demand, aided by public opinion, custom, and trade organization, enable him to enforce upon his employer. Whether he expends the wages so received upon his family or upon his own *menus plaisirs* depends, of course, entirely

upon his goodwill, since the State, though it recognizes in theory the rights of wife and children to maintenance, does practically nothing to enforce it; such laws as do embody this right being so imperfect and so badly carried out that they are next door to valueless as a protection. In the normal case, however, the family does receive the benefit of the man's wages, at least up to the point of minimum subsistence level, and the vast majority of wives and of children below fourteen are wholly or mainly maintained out of this source. In other words, the wages of the worker represent not only the value of his services to his employer, and through him to the community, but also the value of his wife's services to him and their children, and through them to the community, and, in addition, the value to the State of the children themselves. His wages, in short, are the channel by which the community, indirectly and only half-consciously, pays for the continuance of its own existence and the rearing of fresh generations. The amount so paid becomes part of the cost of production of the commodities produced or services rendered by the trades or occupations which male workers follow, and comes eventually out of the pockets of the community as consumers.

The wages of women workers are not based

on the assumption that "they have families to keep," and in so far as these wages are determined by the standard of life of the workers it is a standard based on the cost of individual subsistence, and not on the cost of family subsistence. It is perfectly true that many women workers (according to information obtained by the Fabian Women's Group, above 50 per cent. of them) contribute towards the maintenance of relations, and no doubt that fact, by making them more ambitious and anxious for money, exercises a certain upward pull upon their wages. But it must be remembered that against the influence on wages of the woman who keeps others besides herself must be set the influence of the pocket-money or supplementary wage-earners who do not even keep themselves—the daughters living partly on their fathers, the wives working to supplement their husbands' wages, and the widows who eke out their poor relief. The number of women whose family responsibilities are really equivalent to the normal responsibilities of the average-sized household of man, woman, and three children is, after all, very small. Even the position of the independent widow householder is not really comparable, since the family she works for has lost its most expensive member.

If this view of the facts is correct, it would

appear that the difference between the wages of men and women is a much more deep-rooted thing than is commonly supposed. It has its roots in an arrangement which to most people appears a fundamental part of the social structure, the arrangement by which the financial responsibility for the upbringing of the family is thrown on the father. The argument that it is an indisputable principle of justice that if men and women do the same work they shall receive the same pay can be countered by the proposition, apparently equally indisputable, that if men are to pay for the upbringing of the rising generation they must be given some money to do it with. Looked at in this way, the claim of women who do not bear the same domestic burdens to receive the same remuneration seems to involve an ignoring of the still more potent claims of those wives and mothers who are rendering the most essential of all services to the State, who have to be maintained during the performance of those services, and who are at present receiving their maintenance in an indirect fashion through the wages of their husbands.

The line of argument I have been following usually either irritates or depresses all women who have the interests of their own sex at heart, because it seems to point to an *impasse*. If

the wages of men and women are really based upon fundamentally different conditions, and if these conditions cannot be changed, then it would seem that fair competition between them is impossible, and that women are the eternal blacklegs, doomed, despite themselves, to injure the prospects of men whenever they are brought into competition with them, and by a sort of irony of fate to undermine just those standards of family life which should be most sacred to them. If that were really so, then it would seem as if men were justified in treating women—as in practice they have treated them—as a kind of industrial lepers, segregated in trades which men have agreed to abandon to them, permitted to occupy themselves in making clothing or in doing domestic services for each other, and in performing those subsidiary processes in the big staple trades, which are so monotonous or unskilled that men do not care to claim them. The result of this treatment has been a marked growth of unrest and discontent, due as much to the consciousness of thwarted powers and undeveloped capacities as to actual suffering through underpayment and unemployment. No one who is in touch with women workers can doubt that any attempt to shut them up again in their compounds after the war will inevitably be followed by a renewal of this discontent in a much more vocal and em-

bittered form. This is partly because their experiences during the war will have given them greater confidence in themselves, and a taste for the satisfaction that is to be found in skilled, responsible, well-paid work; partly because, owing to casualties and to emigration, the proportion of the present generation of women who must remain unmarried will be considerably increased.

On the other hand, if free competition without the attempt to equalize wages is permitted, trade unionists are undoubtedly right in thinking that such competition is likely to be a much greater danger to their own standards than in the past, because the potentialities of women's labour are so much better understood by employers. These will certainly resist, and will receive a considerable measure of public support in resisting, any attempt to handicap them in their task of competing against foreign countries by cutting off from them an important source of labour supply which is open to their competitors.

No intelligent observer who reflects upon these facts can deny that the future solution of the problem is doubtful and difficult, and that it opens up unpleasant possibilities of class antagonism and sex antagonism; that for women especially it seems to offer a choice between being exploited by capitalists or dragooned and oppressed by trade unionists. It is a dismal alternative.

The most immediately practicable way of opening a door out of the difficulty would seem to be by means of one of those illogical compromises which are so dear to the British mind. The claim of women to a free entry to occupations may be conceded, subject to the condition that their labour is paid for at the same rates as male labour, and as it is obvious that they would be powerless by themselves to enforce this condition, it may receive legal sanction. This would probably involve a gigantic extension of the system of trade boards, at present confined to a few sweated trades. The practical difficulties to be overcome in securing the effective operation of such a machinery are, of course, innumerable. But they are probably not insuperable, and the plan might work fairly well as a makeshift, provided always that women, with the employers' help, manage to escape the almost insolently obvious trap that trade unions are already laying for them, by insisting that the rates of pay which they are permitted to accept shall be sufficiently lower than men's rates to balance, but not more than balance, the inherent disadvantages of female labour. It is true that such an arrangement ignores the distinction between the wage requirement of the two sexes, and would mean in practice securing for the woman worker a standard of living considerably more generous than could be

enjoyed by male workers drawing the same wage, but burdened by greater family responsibilities. But there is nothing more illogical or more unjust in that than in paying to bachelors and fathers of one child the same wage that is paid to the father of fourteen. The industrial woman worker has had such a cruelly hard time in the past that no woman at all events will grudge to her any windfall that may come her way.

But the arrangement is obviously a makeshift without finality. If wages are to be regulated by the State, who can suppose that its interference will be limited to those trades where both sexes work? Obviously this would give the employer the strongest inducement to eliminate one sex or the other, so as to be free from control. If State regulation is extended to all trades, upon what is the standard laid down to be based? Can one justify levelling up women's wages to men's in trades where they both work, while keeping them on an altogether lower scale in wholly feminine trades of equivalent difficulty?

Is there not a more excellent way? The one thing that might conceivably reconcile the woman worker to a continuance of the present limitations upon her industrial opportunities, to meagre earnings and to monotonous work, would be the belief that her sacrifice was a necessary part of a social system upon which the maintenance of

family life, the welfare of future generations, depend. For, after all, the majority of women workers are only birds of passage in their trades. Marriage and the bearing and rearing of children are their permanent occupations. But when we turn our eyes from the industrial world to the homes of the workers, is the spectacle of what we find there one that arouses much enthusiasm for the preservation of the existing order? The arrangement by which the most fundamental necessity of the State, the necessity for its own reproduction, is left to haphazard individual effort is so ancient and universal that most people never think of questioning it. But in this, as in other spheres, the war has taught us that, where national interests are at stake, go-as-you-please methods may be too dearly paid for. There is so much futile prattle about child-welfare, and the subject is so attractive to sentimentalists and amateurs, that the real student tends to shy away from it. But the question of child supply, its quantity and quality, is surely at least as well worth serious consideration as the question of wheat supply. Can any one who thinks about it seriously defend the system which makes the remuneration of all the services connected with that most important supply dependent upon and subsidiary to the remuneration of a quite different and irrelevant set of services, those of the industrial

workers? Consider what happens in the average working-class family :—

The wage-earning capacity of a man in the unskilled and the less skilled trades, and in all occupations mainly dependent on physical force, reaches its maximum when he is still quite young, often before he is married. As a bachelor his income affords an ample margin for his pleasures. When he marries, what has sufficed for one has to suffice for two ; as children come, it has to suffice for three, four, five, for as many children as he chooses to have. This has several alternative results, all of them bad. At the best, husband and wife restrict more and more closely their personal expenditure, till all but bare necessities have been given up. As each child is born, a bit is pinched off the share of its elders in order to make a portion for the newcomer. If the husband is selfish, it is the wife and children who do all the pinching. In an assembly of married working women one can usually pick out at a glance which is the mother of a first baby. She is well clad and comely ; the baby kept " like a little prince." As the claims on her money and time increase her standard must be lowered. The home is less well kept, the children are worse fed, worse clad, and worse disciplined. She herself becomes anxious and haggard or coarsened and indifferent. There are

miracle-working members of large families of whom all this is untrue, but they are a minority.

Those married couples who are cautious and self-regarding meet the difficulty in another way: by restricting the number of their children. The rapid growth in the practice of limiting families has attracted much public attention lately, but its quantitative effect is not the most serious. It seems quite plain that while the upper middle and upper working classes are practising rigid restriction, the strata below them, including the whole slum population, are multiplying as freely as ever, while the health authorities combined with private benevolence do just enough to keep the slum babies alive, but not enough to keep them healthy. Hence we are as a nation recruiting the national stock in increasing proportion from those who have sunk into the lowest strata because they are physically, mentally, or morally degenerate.

Even in the normal household, therefore, when wife and children get their fair share of the husband's wage, there is no guarantee that that share is adequate for healthy maintenance, and the system seems irrational. Pharaoh compelled the Israelites to make bricks without straw, but even he did not double the quota of bricks exacted each day without allowing any increase in the supply of clay.

The worst feature of the system, however, is that it provides no guarantees that wife and children shall receive their fair share of the wage which the husband earns nominally in respect of his own exertions alone, though really, if the reasoning of this chapter be correct, upon the hypothesis of their existence. Law and custom encourage him in the belief that the money is his own, and Englishmen are strong in the conviction that a man has a right to do what he likes with his own. Unless he carries neglect so far as to bring upon himself the attentions of the S.P.C.C., or to provoke his wife to demand a separation, he is subject to no pressure even from public opinion, and as selfishness and self-indulgence are tolerably common failings in all classes, the proportion of families where this freedom is abused, though no doubt it represents a minority of the population, is still an exceedingly substantial minority.

All experienced social workers, and all persons whose professional work brings them into intimate contact with the homes of the people, know how much of the premature old age, the chronic anæmia and ailments of the women, the malnutrition and physical or mental degeneracy of the children, is due to this cause.

Many observers, while admitting the defects of the present system, appear to think that any

attempt to disturb it, to relieve men from the financial responsibility of the maintenance of their families, or to release wives from total dependence on their husbands, would undermine parental affection and destroy the sanctity of family life. It may, however, be doubted whether the bonds between parents and children, husbands and wives, are really dependent to any considerable extent upon the financial relations between them. There seems no reason to suppose that the custom of marriage settlements in the middle and upper classes injures the marital relation, while there can be no doubt, I think, in the minds of any who have had much to do with married women of the working class, that friction about money and bitter resentment, when they are unable to satisfy the needs of their children, because of the selfishness or thoughtlessness of their husbands, have in many of them effectually destroyed affection very early in their married lives. During the war, many of these women have tasted for the first time the sense of security, of ease and dignity that comes from the enjoyment of a settled income, proportioned to the size of their families, and paid directly to themselves. It will be interesting to see how, when the war is over, they will take the restoration of pre-war conditions. It is not pleasant to reflect how many prototypes there are of the two women in *Punch* who " did

not think the war would last long; it was too good to last." Let every man who blames them imagine what it would be like to be absolutely dependent upon the whim of one human being, not only for every penny which he spent on himself, but for all the tools and materials for carrying out his work in life.

It is outside the scope of this chapter to consider what should be the basis, the scale, and the machinery of any system by which the State should take upon itself the prime cost of rearing future generations. It might be done through a continuance of something resembling the present system of separation allowances, which provides for the upkeep of individual homes. The allowance might be on a flat rate—so much for the woman and so much for each child; or it might be dependent to some extent on the amount of the allotment made by the man from his pay. Or, again, our system of elementary schools might be developed into day boarding-schools, where children were fed and clad as well as taught, and could enjoy organized play. In the upper and middle classes, practically every parent who can afford it either commits his children to such schools or sends them altogether away from home. Yet it is commonly assumed that the discipline of the ordinary working-class home and the playground of the streets are sufficient for the working-

class child, and when the results are bad the over-driven mother is blamed.

Whatever system were adopted, it is probable that a large proportion of the husbands would desire to supplement the Government provision, and consequently, "having families to keep," would still exert an upward pull on the wages of men as compared with those of women. The potentialities of individual spending are for both sexes so great that it is pretty certain that both would continue to struggle for as high wages as they could get, and would invoke all the resources of trade unionism and political influence to enforce their claims. But the main reason for the differentiation in wages between the two sexes having disappeared, competition between them that was at once free and fair would be for the first time possible, and the services of women—not only in industry, but in the home—would be remunerated on their merits.

CHAPTER V

THE WOMAN'S MOVEMENT OF THE FUTURE

By A. Maude Royden

War, and the atmosphere engendered by war, are the inveterate foes of feminism; but this, and perhaps all future wars, have an element in them which is on the side of the women. The new factor in the case is, of course, the discovery that war itself can no longer, under modern conditions, be carried on successfully without their help. When Sir Douglas Haig called for and expressed the gratitude of the Army to "their comrades in the factories," he put on record the distance traversed by civilization in its estimate of the value of women in war-time since Aristotle compared the women of Sparta with other women so unfavourably, on the grounds that they (the Spartans) were a positive hindrance instead of being merely, "*like the women in other states, wholly useless.*" [1]

[1] "Politics," Bk. II, ch. ix.

If this discovery of the powers of women has its due weight it will go far to counteract the reactionary influences engendered by war. We may then look to see the Woman's Movement developing rapidly and along rather different lines from those on which it has proceeded up to the present. The leaders of the movement in its earlier stages, some forty or fifty years years ago, emphasized above all the common humanity of women and men, and in doing so laid the foundations of all future building well and truly. But since men have always assumed that they were the norm, and alone really and wholly human, women have been obliged to seek to prove that they were not only equal to men, but so exactly like them as to be able to do their best work and develop their best capacities under like conditions. Perhaps the genuine and deep admiration of men for themselves a little overclouded the judgment of the women. Certainly it strikes one as a naïve assumption that women should ask to share the educational privileges of men on the ground that in doing so they would certainly secure "the best." One can hardly read the statement today without a gasp, reflecting on the extreme conservatism, the snobbishness, and the inefficiency which characterizes many of the great educational institutions founded for and by men.

But Stuart and Hanoverian civilization had to a paralysing degree over-emphasized the femininity of women, had denied them intellectual power, courage, public spirit, wisdom, and independence; and in doing this had only carried on and strengthened a tradition almost as old as what is called "civilization." It was right and inevitable that the Woman's Movement, when it came, should be a movement towards a greater emphasis on the humanity of women, and that in claiming a share in the liberty of men they should seem at least to be "aping" them. It was an easy gibe. It had this amount of truth in it—that no one was concerned to prove the obvious, that women were different from men; every progressive desired and *needed* to show that they were very like them.

But now all this may be taken as proved. Woman, who could prove nothing by showing that she could do her own very necessary work, has convinced even the vanity of man by showing that she can do his. A woman who bore a child or many children, ran a household, and brought up a family fit and virtuous, was still only "arrested man," and a perpetual minor; but a woman who can clip tickets on a tramcar is recognized at once as a Superwoman—in other words, a

man.[1] She has been a nurse for many years: this only qualified her for the status of angel. Now she is a doctor in a military hospital and takes an officer's salute, and, whether to rise an angel or not, is buried with military honours.

It is the fact that this astonishing discovery has been in the supreme and crucial instance of war which has so foreshortened the long effort to prove the equality of women with men. All the bearing and suffering in the world has not availed to convince the sceptical male as has the anguish of waiting for munitions at the front—the knowledge that women are working night and day to turn them out at home. In modern warfare courage, endurance, even generalship, are useless without munitions. The gradual heaping up of shells, the increasing and now almost perfect accuracy of the guns, are the result of the work of men who have actually in some cases had to be taken out of the trenches for the more urgent need of the factories—and of women.

To-day the cry arises for women on the land. We can no more do without food than munitions. It is a war of guns on the front, a war of starvation—blockade and worse blockade

[1] See "The War and its Effect upon Women" (H. M. Swanwick).

—at the rear. Which can hold out longest? We can. But we must produce food, and agriculture has been starved of men. "Women! Your country needs you!"

It has been a tragic lesson, but it is useless to repine that it has been set us. The future is in our hands, and the Woman's Movement of the future is one of its most important factors. It has been, I believe, transformed by the war, and its opportunity is great. A considerable number of people outside the Woman's Movement are now convinced that women are human beings, having a human value outside sex. Enough, indeed, have grasped this fact to make its apprehension probable, in course of time, by that large and slowly moving mass of people who are not in the habit of reasoning out their convictions, but of letting them gradually soak in from outside. It has become necessary, therefore, now to consider the points at which women differ from men, and differ not through artificial circumstances, which may be altered, but in fundamentals, and to demand the conditions which shall enable them to do their best work. It is not necessary to show that they can do men's work under men's conditions. It is necessary to find out what is the work they can do *best*, and which are the best conditions for doing it. The round peg,

if sufficiently indiarubbery in composition, can fit more or less a square hole. But it would be more useful and more comfortable in a round one — unless it is ashamed of its roundness.

This is, of course, the crux. The assumption that man was the norm inclined women to show that they could be as square as he. Any difference was assumed by men to be an inferiority, and by some women at least was slurred over and minimized as far as possible. But it remains a fact that women are different from men in certain respects, and, neither minimizing nor maximizing this difference, should simply take it into account, and demand conditions which suit them. If men and women are working together and conditions cannot be made ideal for both, there should be a compromise. At present the "compromise" is apt to consist in the convenience of men being considered, and the inconvenience of women endured in silence as due to an "inferiority" in their natures.

It is, for instance, possible that women "naturally" work faster and take more out of themselves than men. If this is so they should work shorter hours for the same pay. To suppose that this is a sign of inferiority is

merely comic. Again, in some cases[1] it has been found that women can work equally long hours, but require them more frequently broken by intervals of rest. Shorter shifts should be the rule for them. It used to be stated that occupations in which women need to stand a great deal were unsuitable for them. I used to believe this myself until, on taking on a certain amount of my own domestic work, I found that most women never sit down at all, and have almost forgotten that chairs were made for anything but for men to sit down on them. Nevertheless, standing is often a most unnecessary expenditure of energy, and if women can win an improvement here it will be all to the good for both sexes.[2] Everywhere they should be working for conditions which suit them, that it may be found (1) what work is really best done by men and what by women, (2) how far a compromise must be effected when men and women work together, (3) in what respects radical changes are necessary in order to get

[1] Miss Margaret Ashton tells me that this is the case with women tram-conductors. See also H. M. Swanwick's "The War and its Effect upon Women," p. 4.

[2] Some of the London omnibuses now have seats for conductors, and during many parts of the day these are used without any inconvenience whatever to the public. It would be a good thing if the same consideration were given to the nurses in our hospitals.

the best service of women wherever it is given.

This, it will be said, may involve an almost revolutionary change in some cases. Certainly, if it is necessary. Why not? The world must cease to be "virocentric" without becoming "mulier-centric." It must cease to suppose that the way in which men work is necessarily the "right" way in a sense which makes any other way the "wrong" way. It must cease to regard physical or psychological differences between men and women as mere instances of inferiority on the part of the women. "The handicap of sex" is an expression which could only find its vogue in a virocentric world,[1] or, to revert to my simile, a world made for square pegs and full of pity or contempt for round ones. It is true that, on the whole, the world is organized for the convenience of the square peg only. It is precisely this that must be changed, and will be changed, now that women are not afraid or ashamed of their difference from men. "You do not speak like a man," said a man pityingly to one of our ablest public speakers. "I have no wish to," was the reply.

[1] However deeply I differ from Mrs. Perkins Gilman in her suggested remedies for a "virocentric" civilization, I feel, in common with all feminists, indebted to her for her brilliant diagnosis of the disease. See "Women and Economics," "Our Man-Made World," etc.

"I speak like a woman." "Dr. Shaw," said a chairman [1] in America, "is a woman with the brains of a man." "Before I know whether that is a compliment or an insult," was the crisp reply, "I want to see the man whose brains I have got."

It will surely be found that there is a "sex handicap" somewhere and sometimes. Men do not seem to have much capacity for sick nursing or the care of young children. Women no doubt have disabilities, physical or other, for certain walks in life. But at present "the handicap of sex" means nothing more nor less than the difference between men and women. So true is this that it is applied to the women even when it is obviously true of the men. Men have, for example, sometimes greater sexual desire and often less self-control than women. It is consequently sometimes difficult for them to work undisturbed with or near women. The suggested remedy of the anti-feminist is that the women should be shut up, secluded, kept away.[2] Their seclusion in Eastern countries, their exclusion from certain professions in Western countries, is actually justified on the

[1] Many chairmen, Dr. Shaw told me.

[2] See Sir Almroth Wright's letter to *The Times*, March 28, 1912; also his "Unexpurgated Case against Woman Suffrage."

ground that some men are thus handicapped by sex. The absurdity of speaking of "sex handicap" as though it were (in this case) the woman's is glaring. But, in fact, this "handicap" (except where artificially created) is an indication only of those differences which fit one sex rather than the other for certain duties. The duties themselves are equal in importance and interest.

The supreme instance of the "sex handicap" is, of course, generally announced to be motherhood. Certainly hitherto it has been made so. But how amazing that this sacred and essential duty should be spoken of in such a phrase! It is true that motherhood takes a great toll of vitality, time, and strength. It is absorbing, and not easily combined with other occupations. The same is true of any creative work—the artist, poet, musician, scientist, are equally "handicapped." But though the fate of artists is often hard, it is in a virocentric world indeed that motherhood should have been made (as it is) a "handicap" in the race of life. Here are citizens able to perform a duty absolutely essential to the existence of the race. Without them it could not continue. And this essential and unique capacity is described by those who but for it would never have existed as a "handicap"! Not only so, but—so is our

world organized—it actually *is* a handicap. A childless woman is underpaid because she is supposed to have no dependents. But a woman with children is immeasurably worse off. She must either part with them into some charitable or poor law institution or starve herself and them to "keep her home together." While her husband is alive she must generally sacrifice all hope of economic independence in order to bear and rear children; for it is not supposed for a moment that work should be paid or can have any economic value that is solely done by women and could never in any circumstances be done by men. Yet economic independence becomes dearer and dearer to women. Those (and they are many) who have tasted it during the war are in no hurry to give it up. Neither, indeed, do they wish to neglect their children. How is the problem to be solved?

By some[1] it is suggested that motherhood need not really be so great or absorbing an affair. Crêches, nurseries, and schools, combined with better hygiene and a State medical service, will set the average woman free to earn outside. By others it is felt that the economic inferiority

[1] Notably by Mrs. Perkins Gilman, whose books I have already referred to, and by the writers quoted in the introductory chapter. My own reasons for thinking that hers is not the way out are developed in Chapter II.

of women is, and must remain, an accepted fact. I do not believe the Woman's Movement of the future will take these lines. It cannot really be argued that citizens who perform an essential service (which they can withhold if they choose) are economically valueless because that service takes all or most of their strength. As well say that a workman cannot earn his living because his work takes all his strength. Our object will not be to enable mothers to earn their living, but to ensure that, *since they have earned it*, they should get it. I cannot see any way but State endowment of motherhood. The one really fundamental difference between men and women is (again) a "difference," it is certainly not an inferiority. For women to try to reduce it to a trifle when it is really so great a thing is an acceptance of masculine standards too dishonouring and too artificial to endure.

The State needs children, which women can give or withhold. It needs them so badly as to encourage some extremists to clamour for polygamy, concubinage, even promiscuity.[1] And in the meantime women with children cannot get housed, men cannot get posts, widows have to put their children into institutions, and restriction of the birth-rate is practised everywhere

[1] See newspaper correspondence on "war babies."

under pressure of economic necessity! The State alone can remedy this. Women desire to have children and to look after them, but they will no longer undertake this duty in intolerable conditions. Let their work be, as other work is, their independence, not a bar to it. Children have no "exchange value"? Neither have soldiers: but the State needs, and therefore pays for them. No one says a man must depend on his wife for maintenance because he is a soldier. No man, though he be a millionaire, refuses his soldier's pay. So should it be with women. Endowment of motherhood should be without any trace of charitable or class legislation. You cannot, indeed, pay for all that motherhood means, but neither can you pay for a man to die. Yet soldiers are "endowed" by the State.

Such a reform as this must necessarily take a great deal of thought in working out, since nothing like it exists yet in any country, and no precedents, good or bad, can be consulted.[1] But if and when the working out of the scheme comes to be considered it is essential that men

[1] The "maternity benefit" and "mothers' pensions" schemes, already in working in some countries, are radically different from real "endowment of motherhood," in that they are all given only to the poor mother, and therefore are tainted with the idea of charity rather than of recognition for service given.

and women should realize that motherhood is not a "handicap" but a great opportunity, an essential service; that the first object of legislation about it should not be to enable women to do it as quickly and as easily as possible, but as *well* as possible; that for this they require, and will demand, conditions which fit *this work*—not conditions which fit other people for quite other work.

And first of all is the condition of freedom. Many feminists object to the endowment of motherhood because they believe (on the analogy of men's work) that it must carry with it the element of compulsion. This is not at all necessary. Compulsory motherhood is almost a contradiction in terms if we understand by the word "motherhood" anything more than the physical act of giving birth to a child. It is—whatever we understood by the word—revolting to every decent man and woman. Children have a right not to be received with shrinking reluctance or tended by unsympathetic and unwilling guardians. The affair of the State is simply to have the children it needs, to have them born under good conditions, and brought up well and fit. It is concerned with results, and endowment should depend on results. If a mother presents her children having reached the required standard, it is not the business of the State to consider

by what arrangement the result is achieved. She can do the work herself, share it, or delegate it. Compulsion must in no case enter in.

Such a reform alone can solve the eternally vexed question of "equal pay for equal work." [1] At present it is hopelessly confused by the question of "maintenance." A "living wage" for a man is held to be one which permits him to "maintain" a wife and family. The assumption is that the wife and children are alike helpless and unproductive persons "supported" by the husband. This is true of young children; it is grotesquely untrue of wives. They are earning their living, and earning it hard. The only trouble is that they sometimes do not get it, and never have a right to it that can be enforced. In the meantime the assumption that men have to "support" women creates bitter sex antagonism between male and female labour outside the home, and apparently there is no way out of the difficulty, as women are not held to support dependents, are expected in consequence to accept a permanently lower wage, and constitute a perpetual menace to the higher standard of the men. Endowment of motherhood would kill the mischievous idea that women are "supported" by their husbands,

[1] This point is discussed also by Miss Eleanor Rathbone in the preceding chapter.

would withdraw a large number of women from the labour market,[1] and would make equal pay for equal work a practical possibility instead of a pious or impious opinion.

If I am right in believing that most women desire to have children, and that motherhood is to them an absorbing duty and not merely an episode, it follows that the average woman will generally be in other walks of life not an expert but an amateur. She will be an amateur in arts and professions, an expert in human life. This, again, is (I believe) a permanent difference between the average woman and the average man, due to their natural qualities and vocations.[2] Let us therefore take it into account. Women, generally speaking, will make the care of their children the first claim on them during a part of their lives. Before and after this will not be the case; but such a scheme of life imposes, in many kinds of work, the status of the amateur. In others, where the work demands less of the worker, the *expectation* of withdrawal for a considerable period still makes

[1] Not, as I hope I have already made clear, by compulsion but because a very large number of women prefer to run their homes and rear their children themselves, if they are given proper conditions to do it, and neither dragooned nor treated as breeding machines.

[2] The exceptional man and woman, like all geniuses, make their own rules.

it less likely that a woman will reach the top of the tree than a man. In yet others the experience of motherhood will be so great an asset as to make women more desired than men. This should often be the case in teaching, in medicine, and in many administrative posts.

It is perhaps looking too far ahead, and yet it is worth suggesting, that this preference for "the expert in humanity" should be especially operative in choosing our governors. Government by amateurs has been, and still is to some extent, the hall-mark of the British Constitution, and even now the increasing power of the professional politician is regarded with suspicion and dislike. Nothing could be more justifiable than this suspicion. Authority should be in the hands of those who are before all sane, balanced, and endowed with a sense of proportion. These are not the qualities of the expert. He knows one subject too well to be balanced; his sense of proportion is lost in his sense of the importance of his own subject. He therefore should never be the final authority in government. The system by which the permanent official is the expert but the head of the department an amateur is one so admirable as to convince us, even in our most depressed moments, that the Briton really has political genius. If he continues to display it, it seems probable that the Houses

of Parliament will gain a considerable leavening of women members, who from the circumstances of their lives will not be "professional politicians," and who will come to the work of government enriched by a great human experience and a great human service. To such rulers the true end and government will not be any one department of life, whether wealth, defence, aggression, or territory, but all these things always in subordination to human life.

It is again impossible to draw any hard-and-fast line. There are men who have this humane point of view, women—even mothers—who have it not. The fittest in each case will no doubt survive. But that women should bring to the civilization of the future something distinctively womanly as well as something broadly human all who love variety and wealth of experience must hope. If they merely reinforce the State with the ability, judgment, and public spirit already shown by men (as no doubt they will) they will do much, for the greater number of its citizens who are interested in and responsible for the progress of a State the better. But if they also bring their peculiar quality and experience for the enrichment of the State, the civilization of the future may well have a diversity, a wealth, a humanity, which as yet we have only begun to apprehend. As between

the races so also between the sexes, there is a variety of infinite value; in humanity, as in the Church, not only "the same spirit" but "diversity of gifts."

CHAPTER VI

EDUCATION

By ELINOR BURNS

Fetters of gold are still fetters, and the softest lining can never make 'em so easy as Liberty.—MARY ASTELL.

THEORISTS are eager to admit that the real purpose of education is to stimulate rather than to instruct, to develop thought rather than to impart knowledge. Yet social conditions give an ever-increasing money value to expert knowledge, so that the man who knows all about medicine or motors or millinery gains easily in the economic race upon the man whose literary curiosity is insatiable, or whose interest in philosophy has led him to reformulate the laws of thought.

In the last chapter it was shown that it is unnecessary to argue that women can do exactly the same work as men, under exactly the same conditions; rather, it is important to find out what each can do best, and to aim at providing the best conditions.

But this discovery must be made not only for men and women collectively, but individually for

every boy and girl, and no teacher or parent, however far-seeing, can foretell the result for any particular child. Education is the process of fitting the child for an independent and active life: and if the child is a girl, it is impossible to determine beforehand whether that activity will be found in motherhood or in some other work. But in either case economic independence must be within reach. For the woman, whose work is motherhood, independence can only be secured by the endowment of maternity; for the woman who chooses, either permanently or for a part of her life, some other kind of work, independence can only be secured by reaching a certain degree of efficiency in some industry or profession. For this reason education must give every girl the chance of becoming an expert in the strict sense, so that she may have in her own hands, and apart from marriage, the means of securing independence.

It is true that feminism demands both for men and women something more than economic independence: that a specialist education alone, however successful, cannot bring about that fellowship of free activity for which the feminist movement stands. But economic freedom is a necessary first step, and women have been slow to realize its urgency. The tradition of dependence is so deep-rooted that even now we tend to regard the

education of girls as a substitute for freedom rather than as a means to its attainment. Women have clung desperately to the belief that the mind, being its own place, must make a heaven of hell and must transcend the bondage of the flesh ; they have submitted to economic slavery for more than two centuries since the demand for higher education became articulate in the writings of Mary Astell. And so it has come about that they have been left behind in the struggle for efficiency ; and their immediate need in all classes is the opening of wider opportunities for expert training. But it remains the profounder problem of education, both for boys and girls, to find some way of producing experts who are also lovers of knowledge, specialists who are still capable of new thought.

At the root of all theories of education one of two opposite impulses can be traced : on the one hand the impulse to limit and exclude, on the other the impulse to include and extend. One or other of these two conflicting views—the ascetic and the epicurean—has influenced not only all educational controversies, but all actual systems of education that human society has produced. The expert may be the product of either, but the exclusive system in its extreme form can only turn out a human machine, while the reverse

theory may develop that ideal being whose mental experience includes something of everything and everything of something.

Certain temperaments have always been drawn to the view of the ascetic, who, by cutting off all activities and denying all desires save in one direction, aims at producing an instrument perfectly controlled and perfectly concentrated—the mind, "unaffrighted by the silence round it, undistracted by the sights it sees," working in complete isolation towards some inhuman end. This was the inspiration of mediæval education. It led inevitably to a discipline based upon the acceptance of authority, and to the surrender of the individual will in an ecstasy of obedience. It produced the whole of the monastic system of education, and with it the conception of pure scholarship. It survives in that still living ideal of a university as a place where young men dwell apart from the world absorbed in abstract studies, and subject to a discipline which saves them from contact with disturbing influences.

At the other extreme is the view which has found its latest educational embodiment in the Montessori system. Every child, from the very beginning, is to be given the widest possible choice of occupation, the most varied interests from which to select: neither selection nor concentration may be forced in any direction, and there must be

no discipline but the discipline of desire, no guidance but the guidance of interest. Every capacity must be freely developed, and each individual mind is encouraged to take all knowledge for its province. What is to the ascetic view the type of intellectual licence has become the ideal for the epicureans of education. Faustus takes the place of Saint Jerome for the Montessori child.

But intellectual licence remains a real danger: the dilettante is as unprofitable to society as the disciple of pure scholarship, and the theory of all-round development can only succeed when it is realized that the power to select deliberately, and in accordance with some clear purpose is the faculty which above all must be developed. It is useless to provide wide opportunities if the power of choice is denied.

On the whole the ascetic tradition prevails in modern education. We no longer aim at obedience to monastic discipline, but we do exclude and limit for the child so that he may grow up to perpetuate some special caste or creed. At best we prepare him for a particular social or professional atmosphere, at worst education becomes a device for turning out units to fit into some fixed place in the social machine. At any rate after the first few years, we very rarely aim at the development of personality, or the

calling forth of that particular contribution, which it is the birthright of every individual to make towards the life of humanity.

In the education of girls exclusion generally begins very early. Certain interests are cut off and certain aptitudes are suppressed almost from the first, and other interests are prematurely encouraged. Girls are given dolls, while boys are encouraged to play with more or less constructive toys, so that immediately the personal and emotional interests are developed in girls at the expense very often of more active impulses ; and so the process goes on. There are many schools for girls in which natural science in any form is an unknown study, and where sewing is the only kind of manual occupation provided. Yet it is probably through manual training that the idea of co-operative work can at first be most easily developed. In the typical girls' school the whole scheme is competitive, and the whole emphasis falls upon the personal and emotional rather than upon the active and constructive impulses of the child's mind.

Among working-class children the differentiation between boys and girls is less evident because the principle of exclusion is carried further for both. Not only is the idea of co-operation absent, and any attempt to develop the constructive faculties wholly lacking, but even that stimulus

to appreciation—to a knowledge and right understanding of other people's work—which middle-class education does at times supply, is denied to the elementary school child. The ascetic system at its best cannot be a preparation for the full and free life of our hopes, but it may inspire a fine intellectual ideal—the mind "voyaging through strange seas of thought alone." For the child in our elementary schools even the most distant acquaintance with such an ideal is impossible. To get the maximum number of attendances is the first aim of the elementary teacher, and the second, to introduce into the children's minds the maximum amount of information on certain strictly limited subjects. The children are not to think but to know; not to reflect but to repeat; and none of the teaching which they receive has for the average boy or girl any particular relation to its present life or to its hopes—if it has any—for the future.

But in the teaching of girls this absence of any attempt to bring the subject studied into relation with the child's life is characteristic, with a few exceptions, not merely of the elementary school, but of the private school and the high school—indeed, of all except the few public schools which are admittedly a step to the university. Except at the universities and at those girls' schools which are definitely in touch with a uni-

versity, not merely any sort of intellectual ambition, but even the idea of preparing for any particular profession, is lacking. How many parents or teachers even now would ask a girl, as they ask a boy, "What are you going to be when you are grown up?" For girls who are not obliged afterwards to earn a living the process called education has aimed, in so far as it had any clear purpose, at suppressing independence of thought and the desire for active work. Even to-day there are parents who encourage their daughters in the belief that for a girl "to know about everything and to discuss everything"—still more, for a girl to do everything that a man may do—makes her less attractive in the eyes of the desirable husband: and as marriage is the tacit aim, though not the avowed purpose, of almost all parents for their daughters, this belief still has the power to influence the education of girls in hundreds of schools.

During the war, with its greatly increased demand for women workers, the lack of training among the younger women has made itself felt wherever they have tried to take up any but the least responsible kinds of work. Adaptability and endurance are the qualities which have marked their efforts, and these have been evident chiefly in occupations which need manual skill

and physical resistance; in the kinds of work where concentration, independence, and the power to see things in their relation to a general scheme are necessary, a great many women have failed. The common complaint is that they are not interested in their work: and the demand for women with university degrees is rapidly increasing on the assumption that they at any rate are accustomed to work with a certain degree of intelligent interest. Yet the salaries offered even to university women hardly ever rise beyond £200 a year, and among women of the middle class the feeling that there is something shameful in working for money persists. Only education can destroy this feeling: but in that education parents as well as teachers must take part.

The earlier stages of the opening of university education to women probably strengthened this prejudice, because it was the fact that a comparatively small proportion of university women married. It was felt that a girl who chose education and a profession was more or less cut off from the possibility of marriage, and that for a woman to remain unmarried was either contemptible or disgraceful. Parents held that marriage was an occupation in itself, was in fact the best paid career open to women, and one for which no training was required; and that any sort of professional training might be a dis-

qualification. Now that women have been admitted to the universities for nearly two generations, the belief that girls must choose once for all between preparing for a profession or remaining unprepared for marriage is fast disappearing among the class from which the universities are chiefly supplied. In the working classes, where wage-earning begins earlier, and where marriage means work, it has never existed; among working-class girls technical training is not a disqualification for marriage, but marriage is considered so probable, and is in fact so much a "full time" occupation as to make training for any other employment seem hardly worth while. But for girls who are neither of the university class nor of the working class the old evil tradition goes on. It is in the boarding-school which provides for the children of the wealthy, in the high school where the education of the middle-class girl begins and ends, and most of all, perhaps, in the homes of both classes, that reform is urgently needed. It is upon the ignorance and irresponsibility of girls of these two classes that "war work" has shed its light with the most searching effect; but their war work will not have been in vain if parents and teachers have learnt from it the need to provide every girl with the means of earning her own living.

For the children of the working classes the

prospect of marriage is beginning to have a different and much less disastrous effect upon education. Partly because these girls marry younger, partly because the common attitude to the question among wage-earners is more straightforward, it is now generally acknowledged that some sort of definite teaching is necessary as a preparation. Instead of the attractive ignorance, the appealing helplessness which remains the ideal for young women of leisure, the daughters of the working classes are being taught to cook and to make clothes and even, in a few cases, to wash and feed a baby. As the wife of a workingman must be his housekeeper, this training is of use in the sense that any technical training may be of use: but its value is greatly lessened for elementary school children by the fact that it is generally given at much too early an age and follows upon a most inadequate general education.

The only form of education for girls which hitherto has provided a real mental training is a public school and university education undertaken deliberately as a preparation for some profession. But the professions open to women have been so limited that the process has too often been merely one long succession of "terms"—school, college, training college, and back again to the high school or boarding-school, with no

aim beyond the next examination, and no leisure for the development of any interest or activity outside the immediate demands of work. This process has produced that lamentable figure, the undomestic woman — the woman who is not domestic because she has no home, who regards leisure as idleness in the life of others because she has had no leisure in her own. This is the type whose struggle for existence has embittered her view of all human relations—whose prejudices are anti-man because she has had no time for reasonable intercourse with either men or women —whose fate it is to become the unwomanly woman because she is really anti-feminist. It is in the teaching profession that the worst results of this life are to be seen. Teachers in girls' schools, earning salaries of from £100 to £200 a year, are driven to a life of extreme isolation and monotony, unless they happen to have friends who can provide a richer background than their professional existence allows. What wonder that emotion becomes rampant and leads to the traditional unhealthy relations of the girls' school, when mistresses and girls are shut up for months at a time with practically no outside interests, often—at any rate for the teachers—no physical activity of any kind, and are even denied the emotional outlet which the life of a convent provides?

But it has been possible, even under the boarding-school system, for the girl to escape the worst of these dangers: to fall into the hands of teachers who were neither pedants nor slaves, to find in the strenuousness of the public-school atmosphere a real stimulus to thought, and in the activity of organized games some compensation for the lack of more productive efforts at co-operation. Education in this case is at least not a harmful process: it may leave many of the child's powers untouched, but at any rate it develops some of the best of its purely intellectual faculties. Apart from the universities, it provides the finest preparation for an independent and responsible existence in the world that is yet accessible to girls.

The struggle for the higher education, which was the first step in the feminist movement, aimed perhaps too much at the breaking down of barriers, too little at setting up anything else, to have achieved the brilliant results which some of its pioneers foresaw. They looked at the education of boys and thought that it was good, and many of them were inclined to believe that if a duplicate could be arrived at for girls the emancipation of women would be complete. The system, with certain modifications, was tried; and it has not been altogether successful. It has failed partly

because it was not an ideal system for boys, and partly because, as has already been suggested, it tended to emphasize rather than to meet some of the special difficulties which arise in the education of girls.

The chief of these difficulties are the conflicting claims of the domestic and the independent life, and the development, more common in girls than in boys, of personal and sentimental perceptions long before intellectual development is complete. The rival claims of "the home" and of some kind of independent work make themselves felt very early in the education of girls, and a satisfactory settlement is a permanent problem by which the feminist movement will always be kept alive. There is a real conflict between the two kinds of life, and any particular adjustment of it can only be a temporary compromise; but wiser methods of education might do much to make the conflict less painful.

In the early years of school education—up to the age of twelve—no differentiation between boys and girls is necessary or desirable. The ideal system for children of all classes under twelve is probably the co-education day-school. If manual training were made more important and more attractive for all children; if the idea of joint effort took the place of competition, not only in such things as carpentry or gardening,

but in all scientific subjects, and as far as possible in the study of languages and literature; and if knowledge of sex were an accepted part of the teaching given to all children before twelve, the difficulties of the later years of education would become very much less acute.

It is in the second stage of education—from the age of twelve up to sixteen or seventeen—that the difficulties of co-education become most obvious. It is at this stage that girls would benefit most by sharing the interest in technical processes and impersonal facts which is common among boys; but it is at this period also that the emotional faculties of girls develop most quickly, so that at sixteen the girl is often as far ahead of the boy in her sense of personal values as she is behind him in "general information." It is very doubtful whether in this phase co-education has a counterbalancing effect upon either boys or girls. On the whole they prefer to be apart; even in the same family or in a co-education boarding-school there is a tendency to separate and to regard each other with a mutual contempt which is not entirely the result of their upbringing. Among working-class children it is very rare to see voluntary companionship between boys and girls from twelve to sixteen. It is true that the experiments in co-education boarding-schools which have been

tried in England have made the old mistake of trying to make the girls conform to the already established habits and traditions of boys, instead of starting afresh for both. But between twelve and sixteen the sexes have less in common than at any other stage, and forced association in the conditions of the boarding-school tends to emphasize their differences rather than their common interests. On the whole it is improbable that even the strictest equality of treatment would produce the desired result. But real companionship is possible between children of either sex and older people of the other; and for this reason the accepted system of the boarding-school which cuts off boys or girls from association with any one of the other sex, and with all but a very limited class of their own, is quite as undesirable as the co-education boarding-school. The ideal again is the day-school, which would give both to boys and girls, outside the school, time and opportunity for the varied intercourse with other people which ordinary life provides. The difficulty of this system is that it requires not merely new schools but new homes. In the school life of girls it is very often the parents who are responsible for the worst evils, and children who are sent to boarding-schools, however inadequate and however much beset

by routine, at any rate escape for a time the false standards and the colourless surroundings of many middle-class homes. Boys do not often suffer as girls do from home life. There is a tacit understanding in nearly all families that the school-work of a boy is a more or less serious affair, but that a girl may as well learn to expect and to share the endless small interruptions and minor responsibilities to which custom has devoted the lives of most women. It is not only that money is spent more or less willingly on the education of boys and grudgingly on the education of girls, nor that any sort of specialized study, beyond the ordinary school years, is regarded, except by a few, as an unnecessary luxury for the daughters of a family in which the sons take it as a matter of course; but even within the cheap and narrow limits of the ordinary high-school education girls are not allowed to work without distraction or encouraged to work with a definite interest. The incentive to effort which comes to boys with the knowledge that they will have to earn a living is replaced for the middle-class girl by the sense that she is expected to "help at home," and for the wealthy by the duty of entertaining and being entertained, with its attendant functions of clothes and conversation.

General education in the widest sense should continue for the children of all classes up to the age of sixteen; and the State secondary school, if its teachers were paid highly enough to secure the best, might well take the place of the boarding-school and the high school for all classes. In England more than in any other country we perpetuate class distinctions by the elaborate social gradation represented in our schools. The elementary school, the private day-school, the county council secondary school, the high school, the private boarding-school, and the public school—each stands for its special shade of social elevation, its peculiar class tradition. Particularly for girls, whose whole upbringing is designed to fix their attention upon differences of dress and speech and manner, class prejudices are accentuated by their school surroundings to a degree which is out of all proportion to the importance of class distinctions in after life.

After the age of sixteen class differentiation in some degree is inevitable. Technical training must be the next step for most girls of the working class, though an extended system of scholarships might bring a university education within the reach of every child of real ability. The chief objection to the scholarship system as it now exists at the older universities—

the loneliness and the sense of being socially a stranger, which pursues the county council scholar at Oxford or Cambridge—would disappear to a great extent if the State secondary school included all classes. But a university education must be beyond the reach of the great majority of girls merely because they cannot afford to put off the period of wage-earning for three or four years after leaving school. Public opinion regards the working-class girl (unlike other girls) as a responsible being at sixteen, and she is, in fact, often made responsible much earlier. The most that can reasonably be hoped for in the near future therefore is to secure the years up to sixteen for school education, and to provide a sound technical training after that. But when women have made themselves economically independent —dependent, that is to say, upon their own efforts, in the home or elsewhere, and not upon the earnings of others—the wider education, apart from technical training, which is possible for the endowed classes at the universities, may be open to all women. The Workers' Educational Association has already done something in this direction, but a more far-reaching system is needed by which courses of a month or two months could be attended by men and women engaged in industry during the rest of the year.

In Denmark people's schools on these lines have long been established, and in the industrial rearrangements of the future in this country a system of changing shifts of workers must be set up, by which not merely the working day but also the working year of every wage-earner will be confined within reasonable limits.

For girls whose future is to be professional rather than industrial, the present university system, after a secondary education in a State day-school and followed by a special training, is in most cases the best preparation. But the university age for women should be lower—sixteen or seventeen, rather than nineteen or twenty (and often much later) as it is at present. All universities should be residential and should of course admit women on exactly equal terms with men. By lowering the university age the most disastrous phase of life at a boarding-school would be avoided (and also, for girls living at home, the period at which differences between the elder and the younger generation are most acutely felt) and two or three years of professional life would be added. The average age of marrying for women is twenty-seven, and marriage must normally bring at least temporary interruptions in nearly every kind of professional work. If university education goes on up to the age of twenty-two or twenty-three and is

followed by at least a year's special training—for certain professions such as law or medicine the special training is necessarily much longer—it leaves very little time to reach any sort of professional security before marriage. It is difficult even for women who do not marry until they have reached an established position in some profession to return to it after a more or less prolonged break; and this is and must remain one of the great hindrances to the advancement of women in those professions which demand continuous work. On the other hand, it is most undesirable that marriage should be put off until a still later age. One of the penalties which society has had to pay for the half emancipation of women is the custom of late marriages. It is all to the good that girls remain young for ten or fifteen years longer than they did a century ago; but it is unfortunate that this prolonged youth is counterbalanced for so many women by a long period of indeterminate idleness, before they reach the unsheltered independence which should precede marriage for women as well as for men. The cynical view of marriage, which holds that if women were independent most of them would never marry at all is not borne out by facts. Women who are independent do marry, but the insecurity of their freedom, before and after

marriage, has had a definite influence in confirming the habit of marrying late. If girls were free to assume a responsible independence earlier they would be prepared to marry sooner, and the future generation would profit by the youth of its parents.

Readiness for a self-dependent life at twenty-one or twenty-two involves not merely an earlier but a more carefully directed training than the present system provides. The sense of responsibility and purpose, which is so constantly lacking in the training of girls, must be present all through the process of education, and specialization must be guided by interest and not merely by outside suggestion. By our present methods of teaching the child's powers of criticism and comparison are hardly ever touched; she is forced to acquire facts which have never aroused her interest, and asked to state what she knows upon a given subject in a given time. Even in university examinations in England the time and memory tests are the important ones, and examination by thesis is comparatively rare. If children were encouraged to read in order to satisfy their curiosity upon some question to which their attention was already alive; to criticize and give grounds for their criticism, and to question rather than to accept, much of the waste of energy and interest

which education now involves might be spared. Self-education is better than any teaching, and the well-equipped mind is not the mind already stocked with learning, but the mind which can see the value of new facts and choose among ideas.

The ideal of self-education means more than a reform in our methods of developing the intellect; it involves a new conception of discipline and of the relation of children not only to their parents and teachers but to each other. Children have been called the citizens of the future with a persistency of reiteration which has made the phrase almost meaningless; but there is very little in the dealings of the average school (of whatever class) with its children to suggest even the remotest recognition of their free citizenship hereafter. They are fitted into a system of rules and restrictions as their bodies are fitted into the fixed desks of the classroom; uniformity of conduct is encouraged even when it is not enforced, and discipline means subjection, not consent.

How far self-government in schools is desirable as a practical method remains to be proved by further experience; but in the few schools where it has been tried its success bears out the democratic belief that order must be based

upon responsibility and not upon restrictions. The present system of rules and punishments, which is designed to prevent children from taking the responsibility for their own conduct, destroys that very sense of self-dependence which it is the chief business of education to develop ; and the doctrine of the value of habit, cherished by the Victorian age, has been too long and too blindly accepted in all our theories of education. Fetters which are made easy by the soft lining of habit are all the harder to shake off, and teachers in the future must beware how they deprive children of their liberty, not by any physical restraint, but by the bonds of habitual action and customary thought. It is as important to have the power of intelligent choice as to be ready for co-operative activity, and the school which gives children both the opportunity of working together upon their own initiative and of themselves determining the regulations to which they submit is the best training for citizenship. Reward and punishment can only be morally effective if they are self-imposed, because it is only then that their justice is recognized ; children are often completely baffled by the moral judgments of grown-up people. For generations teachers and parents have tried to replace the sense of purpose and the love of organization, which is

present in almost every child, by safeguards imposed from without; they have desired to lead if not to drive, to control, and on occasion to compel. But discipline which is merely enforced is as disastrous to the moral development of children as mechanical learning is to their minds.

If it is admitted that the true meaning of education is the discovery in every child of its own powers and their development in relation to society, it becomes obvious that the actual subject-matter of what is taught is comparatively unimportant. There is no reason why a girl should learn geography rather than Hebrew, or astronomy rather than economics, except that she is more interested in one than in the other. The real function of the teacher is to make children realize the possibilities of knowledge and to arouse attention (and with it the power of concentration) through interest, not through fear. It is unwilling attention, compelled only by fear of the consequences of inattention, which is so discouraging to the teacher and so unprofitable to the child; and if this view is accepted it follows that any sort of compulsory curriculum, and to a great extent also, compulsory hours of school-work, would disappear. But the whole question of the details of school organization—of the size of classes and the length of hours, of

whether any particular subject is or is not taught—is of far less importance to education than are the wider issues which have been suggested. For it is not in the school that education has either its beginning or its end.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

By VICTOR GOLLANCZ

IN the introductory chapter of this volume it has been shown that certain doctrinaire feminists, starting from the perfectly sound assumption that women must be free, have arrived at the false conclusion that this freedom can only be obtained in one way, the method being to approximate the lives of all women as closely as possible to those of men, to pretend that sex differences do not exist, and to insist that motherhood should be nothing more than a trivial and temporary incident. It has been the object of this book to show that feminism of this kind can be hardly less stupid and dangerous than anti-feminism, and that it is imperative that in the future a less narrow policy should be adopted. Feminists must aim at no hard-and-fast system founded on an artificial uniformity. While liberating women from the bonds of a particular conception of duty which results from a thoughtless acceptance of primitive standards, and while

insisting on the necessity for their free development, they must look for a society in which that development may be achieved in an infinite variety of ways, corresponding to the infinite varieties of individual temperament. And certainly not least must they allow for those cases in which free development would itself result in a desire for the traditional manner of life.

Miss Royden has argued that for the great majority of married women motherhood will always make, during certain years, the first demand on their time and energy. I think that this is true, and that attempts to build a society in which all women are compelled to work away from their homes are made with little understanding of the problem involved. But it remains equally true that the idleness of girls before marriage, and generally of unmarried women, is an unmitigated evil.[1] It has a disastrous effect not only on the early life of women, but also on marriage itself. It creates

[1] Of course the question is hopelessly complicated by the evils inherent in a capitalist régime. The wage slavery of many young girls of the working class is an evil hardly less great than such idleness as still exists among middle-class young women; but I am thinking of a society in which all work would be of a genuinely interesting nature, and in which poverty would not compel any child to engage in it until she had received a proper education.

an atmosphere in which marriage can be regarded as the alternative to inactivity, and in which, accordingly, completely happy marriages are the exception rather than the rule. Moreover, there will certainly always be women who will desire to retain when married some independent occupation.

To ensure that girls may be brought up with some definite purpose in life; to ensure that their choice of a husband, and their choice of whether to marry at all, may be influenced by no irrelevant motives; to ensure that after marriage their life may be shaped as far as possible in accordance with their real desires —these should be our aims. Nor is this all. The old arguments which showed that without economic independence there can be no true dignity for women, or for any human being, still stand. It must, of course, always be remembered, as has been pointed out, that even for the men of the wage-earning class no genuine economic independence exists, or has existed for years. Nevertheless, young women of an active temperament certainly find dependence on the capitalist, which at any rate theoretically carries with it the possibility of choice and change, conducive to a greater sense of freedom than dependence on a single individual, whether that individual be father or husband.

It may be a poor sort of independence, but it is, at any rate, the nearest approach to the thing which is possible for the under-dog under modern conditions. Moreover, the larger question concerns the normal life of women in a reasonably ordered State; and even in a consideration of immediate necessities there are classes other than the wage-earning to be taken into account.

Freedom of choice, combined with the certainty that whatever way of life is chosen economic independence will result—how can this be made possible? I believe only by the carrying of two reforms. First, motherhood must be endowed, and ultimately endowed in such a way as to make the mother independent until all her children have reached the school age. Secondly, an educational programme such as is outlined in Chapter VI must be adopted, and in particular girls must be fitted for proficiency in some industry or profession at the earliest possible age. In this way no girl will be faced with the alternative of idleness or marriage; while married women, having obtained before marriage an assured professional position, will be able to take up their work again with a good chance of success when the years of active motherhood are over, and during these years will not have to regard the care of their children as synonymous with loss of independ-

ence. Moreover, in some cases a combination of occupations will be possible, and in others better education will ensure that withdrawal from a definite profession will not mean the cessation of all intellectual interests and activities.

These are the two reforms, touching women, on which opinion must even now be concentrated. But this is not enough; a far wider policy must at the same time be pursued. It was part of the early feminists' argument that unless women were free, there could be no freedom for society as a whole. There was a large measure of truth in this; but it is time we emphasized the equally important proposition that except in a free society women cannot be free. We live at present in the shadow of the capitalist and his press, we are dragooned by bureaucrats, and we train up our sons to bow the knee to every piece of respectable hypocrisy. Feminism, if it really stands for the freedom of women, must stand for the overthrow of this rotten structure. It can only fully achieve its purpose by helping on the triumph of the wider policy of progressive humanity. It is not merely that a high standard of comfort can be made possible for the overwhelming majority of women, as of men, only by the defeat of the capitalist; it is not merely that for both sexes alike real generosity of mind

will only be achieved when the Press has ceased to hinder knowledge and stifle thought. The question goes deeper than that. If the dignity of labour were a fact and not a myth; if the work of the world, being neither soul-destroying in character nor unduly prolonged, gave men the happiness for which they should look to it; if women desiring work away from their home did not have to face a complete withdrawal, and men, released from absolute absorption in bread-winning, could take their share in domestic interests; then would a satisfactory adjustment be possible between the conflicting claims of the active and the domestic life, and comradeship between the sexes become a reality. The success of feminism will be assured when the whole weight of its opinion is used to overthrow the tyranny under which the greater part of humanity is shamefully content, and when women, having helped to evolve a free society, find in it the realization of their own independence.

APPENDIX A

THE REMUNERATION OF WOMEN'S SERVICES—II

REPRINTED FROM "THE ROUND TABLE" OF MARCH 1916

IT is apparent on all sides that one of the most urgent needs of the day is a clear and well-reasoned policy on the question of women's wages. Ought women to be paid the same as men for the same work, and approximately the same for approximately similar work, like the Lancashire weavers and the women National Health Insurance Commissioners? Or ought they to be paid a living wage at only half a man's rate for similar work, like the Senior Lady Inspector of Factories? Or ought they to be paid less than a living wage, like the women workers in sweated industries and the women typists in the Government offices? [1] And if they are paid less than the living wage, is

[1] The following passage from the evidence of the late permanent Under-Secretary for the Colonies before the Royal Commission on the Civil Service is the authority for this statement. 5619. In regard to lady typists, they begin at 20s. a week, rising by 2s. to 26s.—Yes, that is the standard

this to be justified on the ground that they are partly maintained by their male relations, or simply and solely because, as in the case of the trades under the Trade Boards, it is "the highest wage which," in their employers' opinion, "the trade will bear," and the trade ought on that account to be subsidized in respect of part of the living expenses of its employees? These instances are sufficient to show that at present there is no agreed standard for fixing women's wages. Different standards are adopted in different parts of the country and in different employments. The question which has to be answered by those in search for a clear policy is, which, if any, of these standards is right? In other words, *what ought to be the standard*

scale which applies to all Government offices. 5621. We have had complaints as to the inadequacy of that scale?—Unless a lady is living at home it is not very generous. 5839. Why should a woman who is living at home be paid a smaller wage than a woman who has to live in lodgings?—I did not fix the scale. 5840. You advanced that as a reason why the wages were lower?—I was asked, I understood, whether it was a reasonable wage, and all I said was that a woman could live on it provided she were living with her parents. 5841. How does it come to pass that it is cheaper to live at home than to live in lodgings?—She does not have to pay rent for one thing. 5842. But somebody has to pay the rent?—Yes, somebody has to—presumably her parents. 5843. Then she is living on her parents?—Quite so. 5844. And therefore the parents are subsidizing State underpaid employment. It amounts to that, does it not?—It does.

for fixing women's wages? What policy ought we to advocate on the subject?

That question, however, cannot be answered till a preliminary question has been faced, *what is in fact the standard on which wages in general are based?* What influence or influences do in fact determine wages? It is not always as clear to people as it should be that it is useless to set up an ideal wages policy for women without answering this rather abstract and theoretical question—or, perhaps one should say, without answering it satisfactorily. As an instance of the danger of hazy thinking on these subjects it is worth while drawing attention to the theory of wages set forth recently by the present Home Secretary, then Postmaster-General[1] and the greatest employer of labour in the country, to a deputation of officials of Postal Trade Unions. In defending what the deputation claimed to be an excessively low rate of wages paid to certain women sorting clerks and telegraphists, Mr. Samuel stated that in his belief "Equal pay for equal work" was not a satisfactory basis, on the ground that the girls in question had no families to keep, and proposed as an alternative formula "Equal work, equal standard of comfort." In other words, wages

[1] Readers will bear in mind throughout that this article was written before March 1916.

ought to be graduated according to the needs of each worker, and every girl ought to receive as much as would secure for her the same amount of comfort as a standard male wage secured for a man. The Postmaster-General claimed to have "thought very often on this subject"; but he did not seem to have realized that this principle of graduating pay according to domestic circumstances must inevitably cause hardship to girls who received no support from home, and, if applied to men, would result in putting a premium on the employment of bachelors and so penalizing marriage.[1]

This is only one instance of the result of trying to work out a theory of wages for women

[1] The report of the proceedings at the deputation was printed in the *Postman's Gazette* for November 24, 1915. The following is an extract from the Postmaster's-General's remarks: "Equal pay for equal work. That is a phrase in itself very plausible, but it is one which I have always regarded as quite unsound. . . . The right phrase, I think, in this connection is 'Equal standard of work for people doing equal work.' If you pay a single woman the same wage as you pay a family man, you are giving her a much higher standard of comfort than you are giving him. . . . I could elaborate it a good deal, because I have thought very often on this subject. . . . I would point out that the Parliamentary Committees which have examined the question of Post Office wages have never accepted the doctrine that the wages should be the same for men and women in the Post Office. In the recent arbitration the principle of differentiation was confirmed and the Woodhouse award gave a different war-bonus to women."

without taking into consideration the working of general economic laws, which make short work of fancy theories made to suit special occasions. Another and more familiar instance is that of the wages of domestic servants. Despite the lack of votes and of Trade Union facilities for collective bargaining, sometimes loosely claimed as the chief factors in the rise of wages, domestic servants have increased their wages almost more than any class of workers in the last half-century. To what is the increase due? Not to their needs, for other workers needed the rise as much; nor to their merits, for other workers deserved the rise as much; nor to their organization, for they had none; nor to public opinion, for it has never ceased to grumble at their demands; but simply to the working of the law of supply and demand.

The law of supply and demand is just now in very bad repute. It has been described as a gigantic stuffed policeman, designed to scare workpeople off from demanding more for their labour. Yet whether in good repute or in bad, the law does exist, and goes on working independently of what is said about it in Parliament or elsewhere. It would therefore seem advisable to find out what exactly it is, how it works, and in what way it affects the subject under discussion.

What exactly is meant when it is said that

the wages of domestic servants are determined by the law of supply and demand? It is often taken to mean that there are not enough domestic servants to go round, and that those who remain have, therefore, what economists call a scarcity value. But this is obviously not a true explanation of the circumstances: for there are far more women in the country capable of performing domestic service than there are places for them in servant-keeping households. The supply of possible girls is not less but very much greater than the demand. Why then are those who demand servants in such difficulties? It is not because they want servants, but because they want servants *under certain conditions*. Similarly, on the supply side, the difficulty arises, not because women do not wish to do domestic work, which most of them do or will do in their own homes, but because they do not wish to do it *under the particular conditions offered*. In other words, we have to deal, in this as in all other questions of bargaining, not with the supply of domestic servants or any other kind of labour or commodity in general, but with its supply *under particular conditions*. A fruit-grower will sometimes rather let his fruit rot on the ground than sell it under unfavourable conditions. Similarly, girls would sometimes sooner work much harder and endure in-

convenience and even hardship rather than submit to the particular conditions of domestic service.

What is the nature of these conditions which limit the free flow of the supply of domestic labour? Some years ago an inquiry was made into this subject, and the following two letters are typical of the answers received.[1]

"*Why I Pefare Working in a Factory Than going To Service.*—When I was about 14 years of age I went to service for about 18 months and I did not like it at all because you was on from morning till night and you never did know when you were done and you never did get your meals in peace for you are up and down all the time, you only get half a day a week their for you cannot go to Sewing Classes or Christian Indever or any other classes as we do and you never get very large wages in service. And you never know when you are going to get a good place That What I Think About Service."

"*Why I Perfare To Work In A Factory.*—Because there is a fixed time for meals And you do know when you are done. you are not all hours of the day And you have only got one to serve and you can go to has many

[1] Printed in "Women's Work and Wages," by Cadbury, Matheson and Shann, pp. 115–116 (London, 1906).

classes has you like in a week you have got Saturday and Sunday to yourself and you can see a bit of life and we are not shut up all day. We have only got one to serve and we have only got one amount of work to do in a day and we can help other girls to go the write way And you can dress how you like in a factory. And I Pefare to Work in a Factory. I have got a Sister who is about 15 and she works at the Gold Chain maker And she likes Working in a Factory. There are one or two things which can be approved of The Master ought to have a Lavotary so that you can come out respectable when you have done, there hadent ought to be any bad words to be put out, Most Factories their is, So I remain Yours Truly, F—— J——."

These letters explain what happens to the "supply" of domestic servants. A social current has been set up which is diverting it to other channels, and this current is so strong that larger and larger economic inducements and ever improving conditions of service are needed in order to counteract it. Domestic servants are technically "unorganized"; but the strongest organizations are those of which we are least conscious, and custom and fashion may surely be counted among them. From our present point of view then, as examining the working of the

law of supply and demand, it would be true to say that what those who demand domestic servants have to deal with is not a question simply of supply, but of *organized supply*. The organization is unconscious, compounded of the habits, prejudices, and aspirations of countless individual wills, united by nothing save a vague general social influence; but it is there, and the only way in which demand can meet it is by altering its own attitude to meet the situation, in other words, by a similar process of readjustment. In this case the process will be more conscious, because it is against the grain. In order to decide on doing something distasteful—in this case to improve wages and conditions—conscious deliberation is obviously required. But the process will still probably be unorganized: we are not likely to see a Federation of Employers of Domestic Servants. Still, from our point of view, it deserves the name of organization.

The illustration has been drawn out at some length because this seemed necessary in order to remove the objection which people commonly feel against the law of supply and demand. They object to it because it conveys the impression of something grinding, mechanical, and inexorable. It is quite true that it is inexorable in the sense that it cannot be ignored without

disaster. It cannot be "banished to Saturn." But it is only grinding and mechanical where it is allowed to be master instead of servant. It can be controlled and guided and organized. And in this country, at any rate, it is habitually controlled and organized. We have, in English industrial life, to deal, not with supply and demand in the abstract but with organized supply and organized demand. And in many, and especially the higher and more complex branches of our industrial life, this organization is no longer unconscious and spontaneous, the result of the gradual working of social forces, as in the case of domestic servants, but deliberately planned. We are all familiar with organization of this kind in the case of commodities. We are used to producers' organizations, sometimes in the extreme form of "corners" or monopolies, on the side of supply, and consumers' organizations (such as the Co-operative Movement) on the side of demand. But control of the supply and demand extends not only to commodities but also to labour. The labour market is as amenable to organization as the market for commodities: and this fact has long been recognized both by employers who "demand" labour and by workmen who "supply" it. On the supply side, where, owing to the numbers involved, a great effort of orga-

nization was needed, the element of control is represented by the Trade Union Movement, which aims at superseding the practice by which every workman made his own individual bargain, and replacing it by the custom of collective bargaining, that is, by agreements between employers or groups of employers on the one hand and the trade union, representing the "supply" of workers, on the other.

Let us now pause to examine the position we have reached. We set out to discover what standard of wages women workers ought to aim at. We found ourselves faced by the preliminary question: how are wages in general determined? We found that they were determined by the law of supply and demand: but that that law itself was subject to modification by human organization. In other words, women are in a position to organize their supply of labour. The fact that they are individually in need of work is no valid reason why they should accept what is offered them on any conditions, or on any theory of wages, that the employer may think good.

This line of reasoning seems to bring women straight into line with the men's Trade Union Movement. But does it in fact justify women in demanding, as the Lancashire women weavers

do, the same rate of pay as men? Ought women to organize their supply of labour on the same lines as men? Ought they, in other words, to identify their cause with that of the men, and adopt the principles and programme of the men's supply-organizations?

Many people, both men and women, think not. Lord Parker, for instance, who lately raised the question in the House of Lords, is of this opinion, and it is shared by so keen an advocate of women's rights as Miss Eleanor Rathbone, of Liverpool.[1] The question cannot be answered till we have considered what are the influences which do in fact differentiate women's labour from men's, and therefore militate against the adoption of a common policy by men and women in the organization of their labour-supply.

Everybody knows that the position of women in the labour market is, generally speaking, very different from that of men, that a housemaid is paid less than a butler, a wage-earning dressmaker less than a tailor, a woman teacher or typist less than a man in the same occupations.

[1] See the Report of the House of Lords debate of December 14, 1915, p. 613, and "The Problem of Women's Wages: an inquiry into the causes of the inferiority of women's wages to men's," by Eleanor F. Rathbone, M.A., Hon. Secretary of the Liverpool Women's Industrial Council, Liverpool, 1912, of which use is made in the following pages.

Women are in fact at present at a double disadvantage in industry. Where they do the same work as men, they are nearly always paid at a lesser rate, and where they do different work, that work, however esteemed, is accounted less economically valuable and is less well paid. Why is this so? Is there any reason in the nature of things why a hospital nurse should be paid less than a miner, in spite of the respect in which the profession of nursing is held? Why should female professions be ill-paid professions?

There *are* reasons: but the question is whether they are in the nature of things or whether it is possible and, if so, desirable, to overcome them by organization. Let us examine the influences which differentiate women's work from men's. They can be roughly summarized as follows:—

1. There are certain differences which arise out of the physical distinction between the sexes. Obviously women are physically incapable of being dock-labourers or coal-heavers. Considerable difference exists among various schools of opinion as to the natural extent of their disabilities. Some feminist writers, notably Olive Schreiner, claim that men have greatly overestimated the natural physical disabilities of women for heavy manual work. They point to the strength and skill of the women in some

primitive races and backward districts at the present time and set forth as a watchword for modern women: "We claim all Labour for our province." The achievements of women during the war have undoubtedly modified the current popular verdict on this point. But their importance may easily be exaggerated. The unexpected success of women in the lighter forms of metal-work does not alter the fact that they are physically debarred from coal-mining, boiler-making, riveting, steel-smelting, and many other forms of labour for which their services, if available, would have been invaluable during the present crisis. Moreover, even where women have been able to do work previously done by men, it has often been reorganized on the basis of three women to take the place of two men. Besides these differences due to physique, there are also certain differences in the *quality* of women's work which are often alleged to be due to unalterable sex-character. The final report of the Civil Service Commissioners, for instance, noted that women were less well able than men to rise to an emergency. But judgments of this kind are so conflicting and so constantly being refuted that it is safer not to regard the phenomena in question as due to unalterable causes. When the Greek historian went to Egypt he was astonished to find

that men and women had reversed rôles, and that each was doing all manner of things which were considered impossible in Greece. The war has upset many preconceived notions about women, much as Egypt upset Herodotus.

The other differences to which attention must be called all arise, not from differences of sex-character, which are unalterable except through a process of biological evolution, but from differences of sex-circumstance—that is, from causes arising out of the environment in which the present generation of women have been brought up, or out of the circumstances of particular women or groups of women.

2. Women have a lower standard of comfort than men. There is no need to argue that this is due to environment and not to unalterable causes, for every one knows that there are sections of society in which exactly the reverse is the case. But in the industrial world it is undoubtedly true that women eat less, drink less, smoke less, and spend less on amusement. The phenomenon has struck the attention of most students of the subject. "Might not women do more work, and better, if they learnt to eat more?" remarked Mr. Sidney Webb many years ago in a paper on "Women's Wages."[1]

[1] Written in 1891, reprinted in "Problems of Modern Industry," 1902.

The authorities of the Bank of England had an opportunity recently of verifying this hypothesis. There was so much illness among their female employees that they decided to lengthen the luncheon hour and provide a substantial free meal in the building. The experiment resulted in an immediate improvement, thus verifying the observation made long ago by Robert Louis Stevenson that "women when left to themselves habitually subsist on cake."

3. The next difference is that to which the Postmaster-General drew attention—namely, that the subsistence wage requirement is generally less in the case of women than of men. It is calculated that "the man's wage has normally to provide subsistence for from two to eight individuals, the woman's for only one individual." "Assuming that a child costs on an average half as much as an adult, and remembering that the *per capita* cost of living diminishes considerably as the number in the household increases, we may perhaps say that the man's normal wage requirement is from one and a half to three and a half that of a woman." This statement of the wage requirement of women is no longer, if it ever was, quite accurate. Widows with families must now be reckoned an increasingly important factor in the labour-market, and moreover a recent inquiry has shown that about

50 per cent. of the women working for wages are helping in some degree to support others than themselves.[1] Still, broadly speaking, it is true that a woman's wage is an individual wage and a man's wage a family wage; for a large number of bachelor workers are saving up to have a home of their own. Miss Rathbone quotes a characteristic utterance by a girl cigar-maker which illustrates this point of view:—

"You work harder than others according as you want the money or not. Sometimes you only make a few hundred cigars a week. Married women often work quick. Men always do and the men's work is better. They have families to keep, but we like to lark a bit."

The war has for the moment effected a great change in this attitude of irresponsibility. But one must not forget that the overwhelming majority of the normal pre-war female wage-earning population were under twenty-five, and most of these were under twenty.

4. The next reason which differentiates women's from men's work is the prevalence of "pocket-money wage-earning." There is a large class of women wage-earners who do not need

[1] See "Wage-Earning Women and Their Dependents," by Ellen Smith (Fabian Society, 1915). The inquiry showed that 51 per cent. of the 5,325 women questioned were, to a greater or less extent, supporting others.

to earn a living wage because (as Sir John Anderson puts it) they have some one to pay their rent for them. Reliance on private means is not in itself a reason for underpayment. With men it often works in the opposite direction. It gives them an element of extra strength to hold out for what they think is a fair rate. The reason why private means tend to depress rather than to raise women's wages is not economic but social, and is another example of the interlocking of social and economic factors to which attention has already been called. One instance of the way in which the tendency operates amongst girls is quoted from the experience of a woman inspector of schools. "As a subject of composition she gave the elder girls in a number of schools the question, 'Of all the women you have heard of who would you most like to be?' Many said Queen Victoria, others Florence Nightingale, some Joan of Arc, others Grace Darling; but a good many replied, 'One of the young ladies at Mdme. V——'s.' This is a very large, showy, millinery establishment, turning out ten-and-sixpenny imitations of Bond Street hats, which engages its milliners on the following terms: Apprentices pay a premium of two guineas; serve one year (sometimes two) for nothing; then begin at 3s. 6d. a week; and rise, when fully competent, to a maximum

of 10s. a week. One cannot wonder that, finding themselves so popular as employers, this firm has cut down its wages to this very modest limit. The scale of remuneration at several other firms in the same city of which I have records is, however, very little, if any, higher. The highly respectable young ladies working at this trade could obviously no more live alone on these miserable pittances than a guardsman could live on his pay."

The reasons why these pittances are acquiesced in are not economic but social: it is more "genteel" to be a milliner than a factory girl. Millinery therefore attracts the "pocket-money earning daughters of the well-to-do artisans," and the trade becomes parasitic upon the good wages of the fathers of its girl employees. Just in the same way, in the case of "crack regiments," the State itself has become parasitic upon the private incomes of the British aristocracy and gentry. The rapid spread of the idea of "economic independence" in recent years has, however, greatly reduced the force of this tendency in all classes.

5. Another reason is that women's labour tends in general to be unskilled labour. There are, of course, a few skilled employments, such as dressmaking, nursing and domestic service, of which women have more or less the monopoly,

and there is the standing exception of the weaving industry; but "in the great majority of those occupations at which both men and women work, the rule is that the men do the heavier and more skilled part of the work, the women the lighter, less skilled, and, of course, worse paid. To a great majority of working men, and probably to a majority of working women also, this arrangement appears a matter of course. A skilled job is a man's job, an unskilled a woman's or a lad's job." How deep-rooted this custom is has been made clear by the evident reluctance of the skilled workers in the munition trades to admit women to share in their work. Even when they have been admitted under the stress of war emergency, they have, in most cases, still been kept out of the men's unions; and it is the general desire and expectation of trade unionists that they shall abandon these new skilled employments on the expiration of the war. The following words from a resolution passed almost unanimously by the Trade Union Congress last September illustrate the skilled trade unionists' point of view:—

"That the Congress, recognizing the dangers which are likely to arise from the wholesale introduction of women emergency war workers in the engineering trades is of the opinion that,

to facilitate the replacement at the close of the war of women by *more suitable* male labour, and returning of women to *industrial pursuits more fitting generally*, local committees should be established. . . ."

The words italicized convey a characteristic mixture of fear and patronage. If women were really not "suitable" for the work, the resolution would be unnecessary, for the women would not be employed. The sentiment behind the resolution is really twofold. It is partly social and partly economic. On the one hand there is the feeling that the women ought not to do the work because they are women and therefore not eligible for the protection of the men's unions. The men cannot overcome their traditional habit of regarding women workers as destined, from the nature of the case, to remain unskilled. On the other hand, there is the fear that, just because they are potentially suitable for the work, or, in other words, efficient, they are likely to displace men and to lower the general rate of wages. The reasons for this feeling of fear are obvious enough. The pre-war position of the skilled male worker had been won as a result of a long series of battles and much self-sacrificing zeal. The complex rules of their trades are not the result of a well-thought-out scheme but the accumulations of time. Each

one records some special battle and some particular encroachment of the employer upon their wages or hours or other conditions. The exclusion of women has been not one determined act but a series of acts undertaken in the face of efforts to reduce the wages bill by their introduction.

There is a further reason why this attitude on the men's part must not be set down to mere obstinate exclusiveness. The idea that women workers are essentially unskilled is based on the solid fact that the overwhelming mass of women in industry are expecting to get married. It is well-known that the statistical "expectation of marriage" is far higher among working-class than among middle-class girls, and that marriages among the former also tend to be earlier. Working-class parents, when their daughters first go out to earn money, normally expect them to get married and are not anxious about their learning a skilled trade. The girls themselves also naturally tend to regard their work less seriously than boys; and employers quite reasonably tend to take the same view about training them. As one employer who is quoted put it: "There are many jobs one might teach women to do, but it does not seem worth while to risk a quarrel with the men when you know that the brighter a girl is, the more likely

she is to go off and get married just as she is beginning to be of some use."

Insecurity, the fear of getting the "sack," is the bugbear of the male workman: but with those who employ female labour, especially in positions where it is difficult to replace, the position is reversed, and it is the employer who feels the insecurity. This is an all-important influence which must never be lost sight of in any consideration of the subject. This leads up to the sixth and final cause of difference—the comparative lack of trade-union organization among women. With the exception of the cotton industry, trade unionism had made comparatively little progress among women workers prior to the war. Suffragists have been fond of attributing this to their lack of political power, pointing to the fact that there are more women trade unionists to-day than there were men trade unionists before the Reform Act of 1867. But it is probable that the economic factors mentioned in the preceding pages are the causes primarily responsible for the slow development of the women's Trade Union Movement.

We have seen why it is that the conditions governing the supply of women's labour differ from those operating in the case of men. We have now to ask whether these differences are (as some would hold) insuperable, or whether

it is desirable to aim at a common policy for men and women.

But before doing this, we ought to have before us the more important statistical facts about the present condition of women's employment. The census of 1911 showed that 5,754,044 females in the United Kingdom were "occupied" as against 13,132,246 "unoccupied." Of those "occupied," about 500,000 were working on their own account, leaving well over 5,000,000 women serving for salaries or wages. The proportion of men to women in all occupations is 2·4 : 1, having remained stationary since 1901, practically stationary since 1881.

The occupations in which women in 1911 formed over 50 per cent. of the whole, are as follows, arranged according to the extent of the preponderance:—

	Per 1,000 workers.
Laundry and washing service	931
Hosiery manufacture	735
Glove-making	731
Teachers, professors, lecturers	727
Silk manufacture	693
Straw-plait, hat, bonnet manufacture	666
Stationery, paper-box, etc., makers and dealers	653
Lace manufacture	630
Cotton manufacture	614
Tobacco manufacture, tobacconists	596
Wool and worsted manufacture	571

	Per 1,000 workers.
Drapers, linen-drapers, mercers	560
Carpet, rug, felt manufacture	554
Hemp, jute, cocoa fibre, rope, mat, canvas, sail cloth, etc., manufacture	530
Telegraph and telephone service	522

The following is an official estimate, based on the census and Board of Trade returns, of the earnings of female wage-earners in the United Kingdom in 1912:—

Class.	Numbers.	Average earnings in full week.
Women in situations:		
Below 12s.	1,000,000 = 33 %	9s.
12s. to 15s.	1,500,000 = 50 %	13s.
Over 15s.	500,000 = 17 %	17s.
Total women in situations	3,000,000 = 100 %	12s. 4d.
Casuals	100,000	3s. 6d.
Total adult women	3,100,000	11s. 7d.
Average earnings through the year (counting extras but allowing for an average of five weeks lost through short time, sickness, involuntary holidays and unemployment)		per week 10s. 10½d.
Girls	1,500,000	7s. 6d.
Total all female wage-earners, U.K.	4,600,000	10s. 7d.[1]

[1] These various figures are taken from the "Labour Year Book" for 1916. For further details see "Women's Wages and Summary Tables," by Dorothy M. Zimmern (*Women's Industrial News*, July 1912), who gives good reasons for believing that the Board of Trade figures for women's wages are an over-statement, and that the real figures are lower still.

To these the following figures about trade unions are worth adding. They relate to the year 1913. There were then 356,963 women registered as trade unionists. Of these 257,281 were in the textile trade, 155,910 being weavers. Of the 99,000 non-textile trade unionists 24,000 were shop assistants, who formed, however, only 6 per cent. of the Shop Assistants' Union. The National Federation of Women Workers, which organizes women in miscellaneous trades not already organized, has a present membership of over 20,000.

It is not possible to estimate with any closeness the increase in the number of women employed in consequence of the war, but there is a general agreement among students of the subject that the increase is not so large as is popularly supposed. Subtracting the girls who would normally have reached the working age, and the married, widowed and single women who have temporarily returned to industrial life, the number of adult women who have for the first time become wage-earners has been estimated as between 50,000 and 80,000; and the total number of females in wage-earning employment at about 5,300,000.[1]

The above series of figures, both as regards numbers and wages, reveals the permanent and

[1] See Appendix B for table bringing this estimate up to date.

serious nature of the difficulty which has to be dealt with.

Let us look at it frankly and simply as a problem of social economics. There are 370,000 women engaged in the Lancashire cotton industry. Leaving these out of account, here we have a cheap labour supply of some 4¼ million workers, employed alongside the normal wage-earners of the country. We have a double standard of wages, a double standard of industrial training, a double, or partly double, system of industrial combination, a double standard of life. Moreover, this cheaper supply is capable of an almost indefinite increase: for its cheapness and the experience acquired during the war are both strong elements in its favour. It is even conceivable, if economic processes were allowed to go on unchecked, that a large part of the industrial life of the country might fall into the hands of these cheaper workers. What employers sacrificed through their lesser efficiency they would make up for in their docility.

No one who has studied the industrial problems of communities where such a double system exists can help feeling that, whether unavoidable or not, it is open to very grave objections. We have examined the differences between the conditions of male and female labour and seen

what difficulties are involved in forming a common policy for the two. But we have now to realize how infinitely greater are the difficulties involved in attempting to divide the two labour movements and to frame a separate policy for each.

Most writers on the subject shirk the difficulty and suggest tentative "next steps," such as a "living minimum wage" for women. Miss Rathbone, however, boldly declares that a common policy is impossible. "Taking social conditions as they are at present," she writes, "it is clear that the policy of equal wages for equal work is not a practicable one. To attempt to coax or force the great mass of women into effectively demanding or their employers into conceding a wage far in excess of their requirements would be as futile as it would be arbitrary, and would simply result in playing into the hands of the male trade unionist and enabling him to turn women out of skilled trades altogether." Considered from the narrow point of view of the separate interests of individual women, Miss Rathbone's reasoning is sound. To ask women to identify their wages policy with that of men seems at first sight as hard upon the women as it would be to ask a coloured worker, who can live on the Basuto substitute for tea and buns, to demand

a white man's wage. But, in reality, the interest of the women workers is the same as that of the men, and their joint interest is the same as that of the community.

It is easy to see the truth of this statement in general terms. Nobody desires a sex-war, and every good citizen feels that the joint interests of men and women ought to take precedence of the separate interests of either. Similarly most people would agree that in a democratic country democracy should be applied so far as possible to industry and that a double labour system is in principle undemocratic. But these abstract considerations have been confirmed in a remarkable way by recent investigations, which show that the real interest of working women is, not in their own wages, but in the general wage, and, more particularly, in the wages of their menfolk. As a result of careful inquiry into the work of married women Miss Clementina Black, a life-long authority on the subject, writes as follows: "At the risk of superfluous iteration it must be repeated that what is wrong is not the work for wages of married women, but the under-payment, both of men and women, which compels some women to work who might gladly abstain, and compels those to spend many hours in work who might be glad to spend a few. Under-payment is

the evil. If a really self-supporting rate of pay could be secured for men's work and for women's work the law might with perfect safety leave to working men and women themselves the decision of what sort of work should be done by wives and mothers." [1] In other words, the sweated labour of married women is mainly due to the low wages of their husbands. There is, however, an even more striking testimony to the dependence of what has been regarded as a problem of female employment upon causes connected with the employment of men. It is a common belief that one of the results of the under-payment of girls is to send them on to the streets. A careful inquiry conducted in the large towns of Europe by a competent American investigator has gone far to destroy this legend. He found that the evil could only in a very small proportion of cases be traced to the result of under-payment, but that there was a direct and constantly recurring connection between it and underpaid male labour. Its recruits, he found, were almost entirely drawn from the "lower working classes," "the unskilled daughters of the unskilled classes," and speaking of its economic causes he declares that it is "of economic origin and significance in

[1] "Married Women's Work," edited by C. Black, p. 14 (London, 1915).

so far as the region of economic pressure is mainly the region from which the prostitute comes. Whether or not the family lives in this region is primarily a question of the father's income." [1] In other words, the trouble once more is not the poverty of the woman but the poverty of the home. If this is true on the side of supply it is equally true on the side of demand, which springs in too many cases from men whose low wages do not permit them to think of marriage. We see then that the interests of the men, the women, and the community are inseparable, and can best be promoted by a common policy for men and women. Let us reinforce this conclusion by a broader examination of the dangers arising from the recognition of a double standard.

The double standard is bad for the men because it exposes them to the competition of cheap labour. But it is also socially injurious for other and deeper reasons. It is bad for the women because it is destructive of their self-respect. It cuts them off from encouragement and education by their natural leaders and exposes them unaided to the demoralizing influences of industrial exploitation. Moreover, by isolating it tends to embitter them and

[1] "Prostitution in Europe," by Abraham Flexner, pp. 63, 64, 84.

to drive them into an attitude of antagonism to men. No successes that they might achieve in the invasion of industries or the conquest of processes could make up for the loss involved by such antagonism.

But the double standard reacts as unfavourably upon the men as on the women. It is bad for the men because it turns them into a relatively privileged class and creates a spirit of ascendancy which tends to corrode the whole industrial structure. No one who is familiar with the spirit of professions or trade unions which jealously keep women at arm's length can fail to admit that the spirit generated by such a policy, however it may be justified on grounds of temporary expediency, is the very negation of democracy. It is, moreover, unwise and shortsighted from the point of view of the craft or profession itself. This holds true of the legal profession, which by its exclusiveness deprives itself and the nation of some of the best legal acumen in the country. But it is still more true in cases such as that of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers and other skilled workmen's unions, where the craft association is not in a position to exclude workers from the trade or even from the Trade Union Movement, but only from its own ranks. In such circumstances a policy of exclusiveness cannot

really exclude; it merely sets up an artificial barrier and creates a conflict of interest where there should be mutual comradeship and support. The fact that the Amalgamated Society of Engineers is helping the women to join a separate union of their own for the period of the war does not dispose of the difficulty; it only postpones it to the end of the war, when some thirty thousand women, some of them highly skilled, will, according to present arrangements, be cast adrift, with no organized association to safeguard their interests. No doubt the engineers are relying on the Government guarantee that "pre-war conditions" will be preserved, and the Government will do its best to ensure so. But it may well be that the keeping of the pledge will not be to the real interest of any of the three parties, and that the reorganization of the industry on more modern lines during the war will create a situation when a new and less exclusive policy will be seen to be needed. In any case a conflict of interest between the men's and the women's unions after the war is a real and unfortunate possibility. The policy of the Railwaymen and the Railway Clerks' Association, and of the unions (such as the Workers' Union) who cater for the unskilled and semi-skilled, is conducive to far better results.

It is quite true that the engineers have insisted, and that the Munitions Act guarantees, "equal pay for equal work." But the policy of "equal pay" is meaningless if it does not also provide for an equal right of entry into the trade. It is not honest to speak of a common policy for men and women if it involves no more than simply filtering a few women into a trade and then safeguarding the interests of those few. A real common policy involves granting the women full and equal fellowship. If they do the work they are entitled to the privileges; and if they are fit to do the work they are entitled to equal rights of entry and equal conditions of training. Equal wages without equal right of entry would simply tend to stereotype certain trades as "suitable" for women and leave them unprotected and underpaid. On this all-important point, and on the question of the industrial training of girls, the men must have the courage of their democratic principles and learn to conquer their prejudices. It is true that people sometimes try to meet this case by arguing that if full opportunities and good conditions are offered to women they will refuse to marry and so the nation would gradually come to an end. But this line of reasoning really conceals the obnoxious idea of forcing girls into wedlock by making the alterna-

tive intolerable. If this were really necessary, we might well despair of our country and of human nature. But it is contradicted by the example of Lancashire where, in spite of the exceptional industrial opportunities for women, both the marriage-rate and the birth-rate are not lower than the average. It is indeed highly probable that a common policy for men and women actually promotes marriage, as it certainly promotes happier family relations.

There is another direction in which the double standard is injurious to the community as a whole. If men deny their protection and comradeship to women in industry the occupations left over to women will inevitably involve an expense to the State. Underpaid trades may cost little in labour to the employer, but they cost dear to the community. When a sweated trade employs girls who live upon their parents, or uses up workers so that their health breaks down and they go upon the Poor Law, that trade is not self-sufficient; somebody is paying to make up the deficiencies of its wage bill; and that somebody is usually the State. Thus cheap labour almost inevitably leads, by a vicious circle, to the subsidizing by the community of just those employers who least deserve to be subsidized.

But there is another and perhaps still more

pressing danger involved in the policy of the double standard. It may lead to the creation of a class of male idlers comparable to the "poor whites" of South Africa—to the type which for home purposes can be described as "the laundress's husband." No more useless or contemptible figure can exist in the community than the man who relies for his support on the scanty earnings of his wife. Yet such a type can easily be brought into existence: for it is a product, not of natural depravity, but of bad economic conditions and ill-judged social policy. The conditions at the close of the war, if unwisely handled, might easily lead to such a result. It can be best averted by consciously identifying the industrial cause of women with that of men, even at the risk of "playing into the hands of the male trade unionist."

APPENDIX B

THE INCREASE IN WOMEN'S EMPLOYMENT DURING THE WAR

THE table on page 216 shows the increase in female employment by January 1917, the last date for which figures are available.

Home workers and domestic servants are not shown. Their number was estimated before the war at about two millions; of female labour from domestic service since July 1914 there are no reliable figures, but the approximate figure estimated for January 1917 is three hundred thousand. Figures for agriculture are not shown, as, owing to the variation in the seasonal demand for agricultural labour, the two dates are not comparable. The following are the estimated figures for the nearest comparable dates :—

	July 1914.	July 1916.
Casual female labourers .	50,000	90,000
Permanent female workers .	80,000	106,000

It should be noted also that the figures do not include the number of additional women

Occupations.	Total Number of Females employed.		Estimated Number of Adult Women employed.		Estimated Number of Girls under 18 employed.	
	July 1914.	January 1917.	July 1914.	January 1917.	July 1914.	January 1917.
Industries	2,172,000	2,595,000	1,656,000	1,968,000	516,000	627,000
Government establishments (Arsenals, Dockyards, and National Factories)	2,000	149,000	2,000	143,000	—	6,000
Railways	14,000	50,000	—*	—*	—*	—*
Other Transport (Omnibuses, Tramways, etc., under private control)	5,000	20,000	4,500	17,000	500	3,000
Banking, Finance	9,500	52,500	8,200	47,500	1,300	5,000
Commerce	496,000	770,000	416,000	598,000	80,000	172,000
Professional occupations	67,500	85,500	62,500	75,500	5,000	10,000
Hotels, Public-houses, Cinemas, Theatres, etc.	176,000	186,000	163,000	173,000	13,000	13,000
Civil Service	66,000	142,000	60,500	125,000	5,500	17,000
Local Government	184,000	228,000	179,000	220,000	5,000	8,000

* No figures for adults and juveniles are available.

employed in nursing soldiers and sailors, the total number so employed in January 1917 being thirty-seven thousand, of whom from two to three thousand are voluntary workers.

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